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## DONNE AND MRS. HERBERT

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In the *Life of Donne* prefixed by Walton in 1640 to Donne's *LXXX Sermons*, Mrs. Herbert is not mentioned. In the 'second impression corrected and enlarged', published separately in 1658, there is still no mention of her. The 1658 edition, however, mentions 'that man of primitive piety Mr George Herbert', her son. 'Betwixt him and Dr. Donne there was a long and dear friendship', to the interchanges of which Walton devotes some five pages (81-85). In 1670 appeared *The Life of Mr George Herbert*; with a good deal in it about the relations between Mrs. Herbert and Donne, and an appendix of *Letters Written by Mr. George Herbert . . . With others to his Mother, the Lady Magdalen Herbert; Written by John Donne*. In the same year Walton brought together in one volume the *Lives* of Donne and Herbert. The 1670 *Life* of Donne contains a good many additions and alterations. Mrs. Herbert's name occurs in it for the first time; she is mentioned (even so, but barely) among the friends of Donne who, since they had 'put off mortality, and taken possession of the grave before him', could not be recipients of any 'memorials of him, and of his affection for them'.

Walton did not know Herbert—whom he calls 'a stranger as to his person, for I have only seen him'. Nor have we any reason to think that he knew Mrs. Herbert. If she has no place in his *Life of Donne*, that is, we may suppose, because, in 1640, and again in 1658, he possessed no information about Donne's relations with her. Writing the *Life* of Herbert, in 1670, he had the use of 'many of their letters'. One of them he prints (with Donne's sonnet to Mrs. Herbert) in the *Life*; three others in the appendix. 'There might be more demonstrations', he writes, 'of the Friendship, and the many sacred Indearments<sup>1</sup> betwixt these two excellent persons . . .

<sup>1</sup> In the 1658 *Life* of Donne, Walton speaks of the 'friendship' between Donne and George Herbert as 'maintained by many sacred Indearments' (p. 82).

but my design was not to write hers, but the Life of her Son' (p. 267, *World's Classics* ed.). The 'amity' between 'these two excellent persons', Walton is careful to tell us, 'was not an *Amity* that polluted their Souls; but an *Amity* made up of a chain of sutable inclinations and vertues; an *Amity*, like that of St. *Chrysostom* to his dear and vertuous *Olimpias*; whom, in his Letters, he calls his *Saint*: Or, an *Amity* indeed more like that of St. *Hierom* to his *Paula*; whose affection towards her was such, that he turn'd Poet in his old Age, and then made her Epitaph; *wishing all his Body were turn'd into Tongues, that he might declare her just praises to posterity*' (p. 265).

Donne 'declared' the 'just praises' of Mrs. Herbert to posterity in his 'Sermon of Commemoration of the Lady Danvers', preached in Chelsea on 1 July, 1627. It is a sermon which has been much admired. For myself, I think a large part of it—the first 126 pages—tedious. What follows—44 pages—I find interesting, intriguing, and (here and there) odd. Mrs. Herbert, when she married her second husband, was well past forty: Danvers was a youth just over twenty. Really, says Donne, she did not seem 'much more than forty', nor he 'much lesse than thirty'. The grand merit of Danvers, when Mrs. Herbert married him, was his good looks. So handsome was he, and his complexion 'so exceedingly beautiful and fine', that 'people would come after him in the street to admire him'. That detail Donne's Sermon misses—we owe ♦ to Aubrey, whose paternal grandmother was a Danvers. But of Mrs. Herbert's personal appearance Donne feels himself obliged to say something. By her first marriage, she had become the mother of ten children, seven sons, three daughters. Donne tells us how good a mother she was, and how good a widow. 'And then', he goes on, 'that *second marriage* turnes us to a consideration of another *personall circumstance*; that is, the *naturall endowments of her person*' (p. 141). 'God gave her', he says, 'such a *comelinesse*, as, though she were not *proud* of it, yet she was so content with it, as not to go about to mend it, by any *Art*' (p. 145). She dressed moderately well; 'her *Attire* . . . was never *sumptuous*, never *sordid* . . . Her *rule* was *mediocrity*' (p. 146).

Moderately good-looking, moderately well-dressed—with all this 'mediocrity', Mrs. Herbert had, even so, her detractors. For the most part, they were other women. We know it only from Donne's Sermon. 'Every good *Soule*', he writes, 'is the *Spouse of Christ*. And this good *Soule*, being thus laid downe to sleepe in his peace, . . . I say that to *all* you, which *Christ* sayes there, in the behalfe of that *Spouse*, *Adjuro vos, I adjure you, I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, that ye wake her not, till she please*. The words are directed to the *daughters*, rather than to the *sons of Jerusalem*, because for the most part, the aspersions that women receive, either in *Morall* or *Religious* actions, proceed from women themselves. Therefore,

*Adjuro vos*, I charge you, O ye daughters of *Jerusalem*, wake her not. Wake her not, with any *halfe calumnies*, with any *whisperings*' (pp. 168-9).

Of 'halfe calumnies' or 'whisperings' about the relations between Donne and Mrs. Herbert, I do not suppose Walton to have heard anything at all. If he goes out of his way to tell us that the 'amity' between 'these two excellent persons' was 'not an *Amity* which polluted their souls', he says so much because he could not well say less. It was the age of Charles II; and Walton looked at the matter simply. The letters of Donne which he had before him 'demonstrated' friendship and 'Indearments'. That these 'Indearments' were, as he calls them, 'sacred', it does not occur to him for a moment to doubt. But *it was the age of Charles II*; and what he was saying required precise qualification. For himself, the comparison with Chrysostom and Olympias, Jerome and Paula, is completely satisfying; nor does he stop to remember that, when he wrote the *Life* of Donne, he had compared him with St. Augustine—'for, I think, none was so like him before his Conversion' (pp. 48-9).

Walton had 'many' of the letters which passed between Donne and Mrs. Herbert. We have only those four which he has preserved for us. He had the Poems, 1633-9, with better means of interpreting some of them than are available to us. It is worth noting that he connects only one of them with Mrs. Herbert—'The Autumnal'. He might easily miss, using any of the printed editions, the verse-letter 'Mad paper, stay . . .', entitled 'To M.M.H.'. Less easily, but certainly not impossibly, he might miss 'The Primrose'. In the earliest of our texts, 1633, and in all our manuscripts, the title 'The Primrose' is found without further addition. The words 'being at Montgomery Castle, upon the hill, on which it is situate' appear first in 1635. Nor can I think of any reason why Walton should connect with Mrs. Herbert any one of the four other poems—'The Blossome', 'The Funerall', 'The Relique', 'The Dampe'—which recent criticism so confidently associates with her. To the person to whom he addresses 'The Relique', Donne, I know, says 'Thou shalt be a Mary Magdalen'; and Mrs. Herbert bore the name Magdalen. Yet the reference to the Saint would be equally pertinent if Mrs. Herbert had been called Kate or Jane. St. Mary Magdalen, I may notice, is not the only saint who sends editors of Donne running into sin, or absurdity. St. Lucia is another. The 'Nocturnall upon S. Lucie's day' mourns the death of some mistress, or purported mistress, of its poet. Who might she be, if not Lucy, Countess of Bedford? An obvious objection is that Lucy, Countess of Bedford, did not die till 1627. The most hardy of Donne's editors would not wish to date the poem as late as that. Grierson, and others, accordingly, put the poem in the year 1612, and suppose Donne, when he says that the Countess was dead, to mean no more than that she was very ill indeed. When he came to write 'The Dissolution'

(unless that mourns yet another dead mistress), she must have been considerably worse; the poem begins, abruptly, and uncompromisingly,

Shee' is dead; And all which die  
To their first Elements resolve.

The truth is that nothing at all in the 'Nocturnall' connects the poem with any Lucy save the Saint on whose day it was composed.

St. Mary Magdalen brings me back again to Walton. The first of the four letters written by Donne to Mrs. Herbert mentions St. Mary Magdalen; and with the letter Donne enclosed his Sonnet 'To the Lady Magdalen Herbert; of St Mary Magdalen'. I set out the letter here, just as Walton gives it:

MADAM,

Your favours to me are every where; I use them, and have them. I enjoy them at *London*, and leave them there; and yet find them at *Micham*: such Riddles as these become things unexpressible; and such is your goodness. I was almost sorry to find your Servant here this day, because I was loth to have any witness of my not coming home last Night, and indeed of my coming this Morning: But my not coming was excusable, because earnest business detain'd me; and my coming this day is by the example of your *St Mary Magdalen*, who rose early upon *Sunday*, to seek that which she lov'd most; and so did I. And from her and my self, I return such thanks as are due to one to whom we owe all the good opinion, that they whom we need most, have of us—by this *Messenger*, and on this good day, I commit the inclosed *Holy Hymns* and *Sonnets* (which for the matter, not the workmanship, have yet escap'd the fire) to your judgment, and to your protection too, if you think them worthy of it; and I have appointed this inclosed *Sonnet* to usher them to your happy hand.

Your unworthiest Servant,  
unless your accepting him to be so,  
have mended him.

JO. DONNE.

Micham,  
July 11,  
1607.

Gosse called in question the date given to this letter by Walton, or Walton's printer.<sup>1</sup> Both this letter, and the second of Walton's four letters (the first in the appendix) are dated '11 July, 1607'. If the two letters are read together, it is impossible to suppose that they were written on the same day. Gosse left the matter at that. But it can be carried further. The decisive consideration is one which Gosse omits. The one certain thing about this letter is that it was written on a Sunday. Donne is ashamed, he says, to have returned home on Sunday morning, instead of on the night of the day preceding. But he excuses this by the example of St. Mary Magdalen, 'who rose early upon Sunday, to seek that which she lov'd most'.

<sup>1</sup> E. Gosse, *The Life and Letters of John Donne*, 1899, vol. i, pp. 166-7.



'And so did I', he says: that which *he* 'loved most' was, plainly, his wife ('and from *her* and my self, I return . . . thanks'). In 1607, July 11 was, not a Sunday, but a Saturday. Grierson, I think, has fallen into a serious confusion. Gosse notwithstanding, he holds that Walton's date is 'certainly right'. But for the oddest of reasons. 'July 11', he says, 'is, making allowance for the difference between the Julian and the Gregorian Calendars, July 22, i.e. St. Mary Magdalen's day, "this good day"' (ii. p. 228). Must St. Mary Magdalen for ever make trouble for Donne's editors? When we parted from our Julian calendars in 1752, the difference between them and the Gregorian calendars *was* a difference of eleven days. But in 1607 the difference between the two reckonings was, not eleven days, but ten. Grierson has got us to July 21. So near, and yet so far! But even if he had got us all the way, it would not help. In 1607 neither July 21 nor July 22 fell on a Sunday, whether by Julian or Gregorian reckoning; and the day we are looking for, the day on which Donne wrote this letter, is a Sunday. St. Mary Magdalen 'rose early upon Sunday; and so did I'. Donne, in any case, used the Julian calendar. Writing on St. Mary Magdalen's Day, 1607, he could not call that day 11 July, and expect to be understood. And yet again: if 'July 11' means 'July 22' in his first letter, it must do so in his second; and Gosse's difficulty of the two letters written on the same day remains.

'July 11, 1607', then, is wrong. But in which part of it? the month, the day of the month, or the year? It is hardly likely that the date is wrong in *all* its parts, or even in two out of three of them. A reasonable assumption, I think, is that it is wrong in one only of its parts. If the error lies in the '1607', the possible corrections are easily disposed of. Mrs. Herbert died in 1627. In the thirty years preceding her death, July 11 fell on a Sunday only in the years 1602, 1613, 1624. In 1602 Donne had not yet gone to live at Mitcham. In 1612, he was not in England. In 1613, he was back in England; where he was living, we do not know; in part, certainly, in London: that he still had a house in Mitcham, we have no ground for supposing. 1624 is plainly impossible. If the error lies in the '11', the only alternatives to it are the fifth, twelfth, nineteenth and twenty-sixth of July. '11' is not easily confused, in writing, with 5 or 19 or 26. It might easily be confused with 12. But the other letter, Donne's second letter to Mrs. Herbert, makes July 12 almost as difficult a date for this first letter as July 11. If, finally, the error lies in 'July', we are limited, in trying to correct it, to two out of the eleven other months in the year, viz. January and October. In both those months Sunday fell on the 11th. I cannot see any copyist or printer reading an ill-written October as 'July'. But I can see a copyist or printer reading January (written Jany) as 'July'. I suggest that our letter is correctly dated 'January 11, 1607'.

When did Donne's 'amity' with Mrs. Herbert begin?

The four letters preserved to us by Walton belong, all of them, it would seem, to the year 1607. In addition to the four letters, there fall for consideration four poems: (1) the Sonnet enclosed with the first of the Letters; (2) the verse-Epistle 'To M.M.H.', 'Mad paper stay . . .'; (3) 'The Primrose'; (4) 'The Autumnal'. Of these Walton seems to know (or connect with Mrs. Herbert) only the first and last. The first, the Sonnet, need not detain us. It is chiefly interesting as bringing the Donne of the 'Divine Poems' back to a date earlier than might, without it, have been surmised, and as suggesting that *this* Donne owes a good deal to the influence of Mrs. Herbert. That the Epistle 'To M.M.H.' is addressed to Mrs. Herbert, no one, I think, questions—the O'Flaherty MS. (a text of some importance) has for title 'To Mrs M.H.'. Upon the date and occasion of the poem, I will offer a suggestion which is, I think, new. For my purpose, it will suffice to set out the last five stanzas of the poem:

Who knows thy destiny? when thou hast done,  
Perchance her Cabinet may harbour thee,  
Whither all noble ambitious wits doe runne,  
A nest almost as full of Good as shee.

When thou art there, if any, whom wee know,  
Were sav'd before, and did that heaven partake,  
When she revolves her papers, marke what show  
Of favour she alone to them doth make.<sup>1</sup>

Marke, if to get them, she o'r skip the rest,  
Marke, if she read them twice, or kisse the name;  
Marke, if she does the same that they protest,  
Marke, if she marke whether her women came.

Mark, if slight things be 'objected, and o'r blowne,  
Marke, if her oathes against him be not still  
Reserv'd, and that she grieves she's not her owne,  
And chides the doctrine that denies Freewill.

I bid thee not doe this to be my spie;  
Nor to make my selfe her familiar;  
But so much I doe love her choyce, that I  
Would faine love him that shall be lov'd of her.

Mrs. Herbert married her second husband, Sir John Danvers, in 1608. When he wrote this Epistle, Donne, I think, knew of the projected marriage. I will try to make this plain by paraphrasing the stanzas which I have quoted.

When you are placed in Mrs. Herbert's Cabinet, her *escritoire*, Donne says to his Letter, among the letters of other persons, some of whom we know, mark whether, among these letters, there are papers from some one

<sup>1</sup> Our texts punctuate either *she alone*, or *she, alone*. But the meaning plainly is 'mark what favour she shows to them and them only'.

person which the owner, 'skipping the rest', reads and re-reads, and kisses; mark if she makes difficulties, only to brush them aside; mark 'if her oathes against *him* be not still reserved'—mark, that is, whether, vowing to reject all admirers, she does not make exception for him; mark if she grieves that she no longer belongs to herself, that her will is no longer free. I have no wish, in this matter, he concludes, to be a spy, to be impertinently inquisitive. But such is my love for her that I would fain know whom it is she loves that I too may love him.

If I have paraphrased these stanzas rightly, the person of whom Donne speaks can hardly be any other than the suitor whom Mrs. Herbert ended in accepting. The letter is a letter courtly and adroit. I do not think that Donne could have written it if at the time (or at any time) he had been the lover, in however Petrarchian a fashion, of the person to whom it is addressed.

So much having been said, I turn, with an easy mind, to 'The Primrose'. All our printed texts, except the first of them, connect the poem with Montgomery Castle; and that it was written there, and so far connects with Mrs. Herbert (or her family), I see no reason to doubt. That it is about Mrs. Herbert nothing suggests. If I may say plainly what I think of it, I think it a pretty and ingenious academic piece. That, when he wrote it, Donne was in love with anybody at all, nothing indicates. The poem is a harmless 'conceit'; obscure and laboured, but essentially harmless.

Grierson thinks it 'probable' that this poem, 'The Blossom', 'The Funerall', and 'The Relique', were all 'addressed to Mrs. Herbert in the earlier days of Donne's intimacy with her in Oxford or London'. 'The Blossom', I take it, because of 'The Primrose', and because of the incriminating 'Meet me at London' in line 33. Yet a primrose is only one blossom among many, and Mrs. Herbert was not the only great lady, or charming and beautiful one, living in London round and about 1607. 'The Relique', because of the reference to St. Mary Magdalen. 'The Funerall', because of 'The Relique'—clearly, they are companion poems. With the bracelet of hair of which both poems speak, Grierson compares the bracelet of hair given by Stelliana (Lady Venetia Stanley) to Theagenes (Sir Kenelm Digby).<sup>1</sup> To Mrs. Herbert, he writes, 'it would seem that at some period in the history of their friendship . . . Donne wrote songs in the tone of hopeless impatient passion, of Petrarch writing to Laura' (ii, xxiv). 'Friendship between man and woman is love in some degree', he insists (*ib.* xxiii). 'In the poems addressed' by Donne both to Mrs. Herbert and the Countess of Bedford 'there is blended with the respectful flattery of the dependant not a little of the tone of warmer feeling permitted to the "servant" by Troubadour convention.' And he 'suspects' that there are

<sup>1</sup> See Digby, *Private Memoirs*, ed. Sir N. H. Nicolas, 1827, pp. 80-81.

other poems to these two ladies 'the tone of which is still more frankly and ardently lover-like', only that the clues connecting them with their recipients have been lost (*ib.* xxii). I may leave Lady Bedford to look after herself. But in respect of Mrs. Herbert—frankly—I do not believe a word of it. I do not believe it, because there is no evidence for any of it.

'The Primrose' takes us to Montgomery Castle. On 2 April, 1613, Donne wrote the poem entitled, in our printed texts, 'Goodfriday, 1613. Riding Westward'. Some of our manuscripts offer titles more informative. For 'Westward', three of them have 'towards Wales'; another has 'To Sir Edward Harbert in Wales'. In yet another manuscript the title runs 'Mr J. Dun[n] goeing from Sir H. G. on good friday sent him back this meditation on the way'. The information offered is specific, and can hardly proceed from mere invention. 'It was at Montgomery Castle', Gosse writes, 'and (I do not question) at this very time [April 1613], that Donne wrote . . . *The Primrose*'. 'Good Friday' has its place, not perhaps a very high one, among the 'Divine Poems'. That Donne wrote, first 'Good Friday', then, a day or two later, 'The Primrose', I find it not easy to believe. Still more difficult do I find it to believe that in the same week he wrote also 'The Blossom', 'The Funerall', 'The Relique'. That on Good Friday, 1613, Donne was riding into Wales, to meet Sir Edward Herbert, I am ready to accept. That he expected to meet him at Montgomery Castle, or that he went there at this time, I think less certain. Montgomery Castle was, at this date, in the possession, not of Sir Edward Herbert, but of an interloper, Philip Herbert, first earl of Montgomery (and fourth earl of Pembroke). The property had been granted to him on 14 February 1606 (not, as Chambers and Gosse say, 1607; see *Calendar S. P., James I*, p. 287). It was recovered from him by purchase in July, 1613. Gosse supposes Mrs. Herbert not to have waited till the purchase was complete, but to have established herself in the Castle early in the year, 'before she was actually the owner' (*op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 26). I should have supposed that, in any case, not she, but Sir Edward, was 'the owner'; and that, if the Castle had a mistress, the mistress was his wife Lady Herbert, and not her mother-in-law. Sir Edward came of age in 1604. Thereafter, if Donne visited the Castle, it was as *his* guest, and not as his mother's—I know no evidence that she was ever there after 1604. In 1608 John Bright wrote to the Earl of Salisbury that he had gone with a letter to Montgomery Castle, 'but found Sir Edward Herbert gone abroad' (*Calendar S. P., James I*, p. 448). Despite the transfer of 1606, both he, it would seem, and Salisbury, expected to find Sir Edward at the Castle. Are we to believe that Donne went on a similar fool's errand in 1613? Or shall we say, with Chambers, that 'The Primrose' 'was probably written before 1607' (meaning 1606)?

Of Donne's relations with Herbert of Cherbury we know, in fact, less

than might have been expected. If 'The Primrose' was written between 1604 and 1607, he presumably paid at least one visit to him at Montgomery during that period. In 1610, he addressed to him the obscure Epistle 'To Sir Edward Herbert, at Julyers'. After Julyers, Herbert was back in this country from 1611-14. In 1612, both he and Donne wrote Elegies for Prince Henry—Ben Jonson told Drummond that 'Done said to him, he wrott that Epitaph on Prince Henry, "Look to me, Faith", to match Sir Ed: Herbert in obscureness' (he did not quite succeed). From our manuscripts of 'Good Friday', we infer that he visited Herbert in Wales in April of the year following. When Donne died, Herbert wrote for him an Elegy in which he speaks of him as 'Dunn, whom I so lov'd alive'; but there is perhaps no great warmth in his verses. In the list that Walton gives of Donne's 'dear friends and benefactors', Edward Herbert's name does not occur with that of his mother and brother. He has a paragraph to himself in the *Life of Herbert*; but of friendship between him and Donne nothing is said.

'The Primrose' is not addressed to Mrs. Herbert, nor is it about her. 'The Autumnal' is addressed to her. I say that, not on the authority of our printed texts, but on the authority of Walton. That he is supported by several of our manuscripts does not much matter. Walton sometimes makes mistakes. But he never makes things up. He does not romance; there is no troubadour nonsense about him. He is bad at dates. Yet good, I think, at catching essential connexions. 'The Autumnal', he tells us, was written when both Donne and Mrs. Herbert were 'past the meridian of man's life' (p. 164); Donne, he adds, in the paragraph immediately following, 'being then near to the Fortieth year of his Age (which was some years before he entred into Sacred Orders)'. Elsewhere, recently, I have succeeded, I think, in showing that Donne was born some time in the summer of 1571 (*T.L.S.*, 30 Dec. 1944). When he wrote the last three of his four surviving letters to Mrs. Herbert, he would be entering his thirty-seventh year. When he wrote the verse-epistle 'To M.M.H.', he would be some months older. 'Past the meridian of man's life' certainly (reckoning the years of life as the Psalmist reckons them), he could reasonably be spoken of as 'near to the Fortieth year of his Age'. From Donne's Commemoration Sermon we have seen already that, in 1608, Mrs. Herbert did not seem 'much more than forty'. Let us judge her gently, and put her age at forty-five. 'The Autumnal' was written, Walton thinks, at the beginning of her 'amity' with Donne. To Donne she was already in her autumn—one of our manuscripts, I am afraid, goes so far as to entitle the poem 'A paradox of an ould Woman'. But it was not as bad as all that:

*Age is a thing*  
Which we are fifty years in compassing,



Donne writes ('Autumnal', 33-4). When he wrote *that*, Mrs. Herbert was, surely, in her earlier, and not her later, forties.

A likely date for the poem is, I think, 1607-8. The only difficulty in accepting such a date is one made by Walton himself. Donne wrote 'The Autumnal', he tells us, when Mrs. Herbert was living in Oxford. He 'came accidentally to that place in the time of her being there . . . and he at his leaving Oxford, writ and left there in verse', 'The Autumnal' (p. 265).

I see no reason why Donne should not have 'come accidentally' to Oxford in 1607-8, and there have met Mrs. Herbert; were it not that Walton has defined 'the time of her being there' in a manner which seems to indicate a very much earlier date. Having mentioned the death of her husband, 'In this time of her widowhood', Walton writes, 'she being desirous to give *Edward* her eldest son, such advantages of Learning, and other education as might suit his birth and fortune: and thereby make him the more fit for the service of his Country: did at his being of a fit age, remove from *Montgomery Castle* with him, and some of her younger sons to *Oxford*' (p. 264). She 'continued with him in *Oxford*', Walton adds, 'four years: in which time her *great* and *harmless* wit, her *cheerful* gravity, and her *obliging* behaviour, gain'd her an acquaintance and friendship with most of any eminent worth or learning, that were at that time in or near that University; and particularly with Mr John Donne, who then came accidentally to that place, in the time of her being there' (p. 264).

Now, Edward, the son spoken of (later Lord Herbert of Cherbury), matriculated at Oxford on 10 May, 1596. He matriculated, not as Walton would have it, from the Queen's College, but from University College (*Register of the University of Oxford*, II. ii. p. 214). Nor was he accompanied by his mother,<sup>1</sup> when he first became a student; nor was his father dead. His father died in the October following: and 'my mother thought fit to send for me home', he says. 'Shortly after', he continues, 'I was sent again to my studies in Oxford'.<sup>2</sup> On 28 February, 1599, he married. 'Not long after my marriage', he writes, 'I went again to Oxford with my wife and mother, who took a house and lived for a certain time there; and now having a due remedy for that lasciviousness to which youth is naturally inclined, I followed my book more close than ever, in which course I continued until I attained about the age of eighteen, when my mother took a house in London'.<sup>3</sup> This would seem to reduce the 'four years' which Walton gives as the period of Mrs. Herbert's Oxford residence to two, or less. Walton can hardly mean to place the beginnings of the 'amity' between her and Donne at a date so early as 1600—in 1600 Donne was under thirty, Mrs. Herbert well under forty.

<sup>1</sup> *The Autobiography of Edward, Lord Herbert of Cherbury*, ed. Sidney Lee, 1886, p. 42

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

Edward Herbert, Lord Herbert of Cherbury, studied at University College. It is possible, I think, that Walton, when he speaks of him as having been entered at the Queen's College, has confused him with a quite different Edward Herbert. On 1 July, 1608, there matriculated from the Queen's College two Herberts, Edward and William, both aged 17, both of Montgomery, both of 'armigerous' family (*Register of the University of Oxford*, II. ii, p. 302). The fact that they were both seventeen seems to point to their being, not brothers, but cousins. The first of them was Edward, son of Charles Herbert of Aston; he was first cousin, that is, to Lord Herbert of Cherbury. William Herbert, who matriculated with him, I take to be Mrs. Herbert's third son. Of this third son, except that he bore the name William, we know only what we learn from the *Autobiography* of his brother; after being 'brought up in learning', he 'went to the wars in Denmark', and later 'went to the wars in the Low Countries, but lived not long after'.<sup>1</sup> The fourth son, Charles, was born in 1592. If we place the birth of William in the year preceding, he would have been seventeen in 1608. I suspect that the matriculation of these two youths, in 1608, brought Mrs. Herbert, a second time, to Oxford. I suspect that, if she had not married in that year, she would have stayed there, to see her third son through his student years. From the watch which she kept over Herbert of Cherbury, and later over George Herbert in Cambridge, I should infer that she had not much confidence in the morals of undergraduates. I suspect that it was in the summer of 1608 that Donne 'came accidentally' to Oxford, and 'writ and left there' 'The Autumnal'. That he and Mrs. Herbert were already known to one another in the year preceding is plain from his letters. But the grand 'Amity', with its 'sacred Indearments', the friendship as between saints, began, I suggest, in 1608, 'The Autumnal' setting solemn seal to it.

Walton, I have said, did not know George Herbert; and there is no evidence that he knew any of the Herbert family. No such reasons as led him to write the *Lives* of Donne and Wotton operated to constitute him the biographer of Herbert. 'I profess it', he wrote, 'to be so far a free-will-offering, that it was writ, chiefly to please myself'. He had not been solicited, it would seem, by Herbert's family; and if he had owed much (or, indeed, anything) to their active co-operation, we should, I think, have been told of it. He was unable, he tells us, to discover when Herbert was ordained, or by whom. Herbert was instituted into the canonry and prebend of Leighton Ecclesia; but to discover even so much, Walton had to go and search among 'the Records of Lincoln' (p. 278). It would not surprise me to learn that, at one time or another, he had delved in the Records of Oxford University, investigating, *inter alia*, the Register of

<sup>1</sup> *Autobiography*, p. 43.

matriculations.<sup>1</sup> I would not put it beyond him, using that Register, to confuse Edward Herbert, Lord Cherbury, with Edward Herbert of the Queen's College.

Of 'the Friendship, and the many sacred Indearments' between Donne and Mrs. Herbert, the only certain documents are, it would appear, four letters and three poems, all of them belonging to the years 1607-8. They make a picture, interesting, pleasing, affecting. But a good deal different from the picture painted for us by Donne's editors and expositors. It is time, I think, that we went back to Walton. Walton, I know, was infinitely simple—really, I suspect, he was as simple as he appears. That it disqualified him for writing the *Life* of Donne, I am not persuaded. Doubtless, Donne is not simple. But even Donne is not all problem and paradox; and when he is, it is in the manner of his own times, not of ours. Mrs. Herbert first comes into his story in 1607, in the hard Mitcham days. At the Mitcham House—which Donne calls sometimes a 'prison', sometimes a 'hospital'; a hospital, often, for sick children—Mrs. Herbert's servant had, I think we may infer, left gifts. For which Donne thanks her—'Your favours to me are every where'. Coming back to Mitcham, he has come back, he says simply, to 'that which he loved most', his wife. In her name and his, he thanks her. She seems to him, indeed, a Saint. That he should think of her as like the Saint whose name she bore, St. Mary Magdalen—and tell her as much—was less odd to him than it is, perhaps, to us. To him that Saint was, as to Walton, 'that wonder of Women, and Sinners, and Mourners'. 'I call her Saint', writes Walton,<sup>2</sup> 'because I did not then, nor do now consider her, as when she was possest with seven Devils; nor as when her wanton Eyes and dishevel'd Hair, were designed and manag'd, to charm and insnare amorous Beholders'. But Donne's commentators cannot be happy, or easy in their minds, except they fix him for ever among the 'amorous Beholders'. Not yet must he put off the troubadour, and put on the Donne of the Divine Poems. When he says, speaking of Mrs. Herbert in 'The Autumnal', that '*Affection* here takes *Reverences* name', they do not very much believe him, finding him elsewhere 'more frankly ardent and lover-like'; or if they do, they suppose, like Gosse,<sup>3</sup> that the poem belongs to a much later period—Gosse assigns it, Walton notwith-

<sup>1</sup> For the date at which Sanderson 'was compleated Master of Arts' he consulted, he tells us, 'the Colledge Records' (*Life* of Sanderson, p. 354). He may mean the records of Sanderson's college, Lincoln; but he may be using the expression 'Colledge Records' to denote the University Register of Degrees. The particulars which he gives us in connexion with Hooker's inception and completion in arts (*Life* of Hooker, p. 171) must have been taken, I think, from university, and not college, records. For some of the detail of Hooker's undergraduate period, he must have gone to Hooker's college, Corpus; only there (and hardly, there, from *written* records) could he have discovered that Hooker missed chapel twice only in four years (*Life* of Hooker, p. 169).

<sup>2</sup> *Life of Herbert*, Introd.

<sup>3</sup> Vol. ii, p. 228.

standing, to the year 1625. Donne must not be divine, or good, too early. Yet the Divine Poems begin, precisely, with the Mary Magdalen sonnet of 1607. 'I commit the inclosed *Holy Hymns and Sonnets* . . . to your judgment', writes Donne. From his four letters, there emerge, I think, two solid certainties: Mrs. Herbert's 'active part of doing good' (so Donne calls it in the last of those letters); and the influence which she exercised on Donne's religion—if he wrote 'Divine Poems' before he met her, we do not know of them: so far as our knowledge goes, they begin with her. From 'The Autumnal', which follows closely on the letters, the 'ardent' and 'lover-like' Donne is notably absent. Some months later, Donne learned that his Saint was about to marry, for the second time. Very simply, this complex lover tells us—and Mrs. Herbert—that he 'would faine love' both husband and wife. So simple it all is as to look almost humdrum. With Mrs. Herbert's marriage, the letters cease, the poems to Mrs. Herbert cease. That the grand Friendship went on, we should not know, but for one circumstance which Walton, oddly enough, has failed to record. In the summer of 1625, the Plague was raging in London, as never before, unless in 1603 and 1593. Donne took refuge<sup>1</sup> in 'Sir John Danvers house at Chelsey'—'my Tusculum', he calls it, with some feeling of ownership. Two years earlier, Mrs. Herbert had fallen ill. That it was an illness from which no recovery could be hoped, appears from the letter written to her at the time by George Herbert.<sup>2</sup> In 1625, the Plague lay over London; everywhere the eyes of the living rested upon the dead and the dying. If the Chelsea house was a 'Tusculum' for Donne, 'so also was it', he says, 'an Hospitall, in ministring releef to the sicke'.<sup>3</sup> There the mistress of the house lay, herself 'expecting', at no distant date, '*Gods Physicke and Gods Musicke*', says Donne, 'a *Christianly death*'.<sup>3</sup> 'Such lovers old' were these two that there passed between them, we may believe, 'many sacred Indearments'. The days of 'dishelv'd Hair' and 'wanton eyes' and 'amorous beholding' had gone by—indeed, they never were, but we have made them up. Mrs. Herbert, already then, 'expected . . . dissolution of body, and Soule; and rest in both, from the incumbrances and tentations of this world'<sup>3</sup>—and from commenting tongues. But 'Friendship between men and women is love in some degree'; and silly comment there will be always. In vain would Walton recall to us St. Chrysostom and Olimpias, St. Jerome and his Paula. We are too modern, we know better. Where we do not know, we make things up.

<sup>1</sup> Letter of 12 July, 1625 (in the Loseley collection, not in Gosse, but printed in Hayward's *Donne*, pp. 485-6). Donne mentions his visit in the *Sermon of Commemoration*, p. 152.

<sup>2</sup> *Works of George Herbert*, ed. F. E. Hutchinson, pp. 372-4.

<sup>3</sup> *Sermon of Commemoration*, p. 163.

## SHAKESPEARE, LUCRETIUS, AND THE COMMONPLACES

BY L. C. MARTIN

It would be a difficult task to place in order of merit all the various phenomena of modern Elizabethan scholarship, but perhaps none is more to be welcomed at the present time than the growing attention which has been given to Renaissance 'backgrounds', *alias* the 'intellectual milieu', *alias* the commonplaces of traditional thought in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Future historians may like to trace the connexions between this development and the contemporary reaction against the Shakespeare and other idolatries, showing what emotional satisfactions may have gone with the fuller recognition that the Great Man had to depend upon a common *Weltanschauung* and so, even in his habits of mind, was not so very much unlike everybody else. But whatever other interests may have been served by these studies, the benefits to truth and perspective are palpable. Some old misconceptions have now, we may hope, been permanently corrected, and some very important contributions to learning and understanding have been made.

At the same time there is a danger that, in the resulting attempts at revaluation, the poet or dramatist may sometimes lose more prestige than he deserves: he may be made to look too little like a Great Man and too much like a sounding-board for popular doctrine, or a reed shaken in the wind of prevalent opinion, and the power and subtlety of his mind may be over-neglected while effort is concentrated upon giving him a modest place in the history of ideas. Moreover, an ancient heresy, that which puts the 'substance' on the one side and the 'form' on the other, seems to raise its head again when, for instance, we are asked to notice about remarks in Shakespeare on the state of man that 'divested of their literary form they are the common property of every third-rate mind of the age', when it is said that 'the rapturous expression apart, Spenser's philosophy is nearly as trite though rather more genteel', or when a writer on *Paradise Lost* tells us that his principal purpose is 'to make better known the tradition which gave heart and blood to Milton's epic'. In themselves statements and aims such as these are of high value; but there is a bias in them from which we may easily recoil too far and so become heretics of another brand. Then, in too full a revulsion, we may find ourselves asking



what the proper study of literary mankind may be, if not precisely that 'literary form', that 'rapturous expression', and the kind of heart and blood which Milton's epic gave to the traditions, in virtue of his native genius and developed skills.

The now familiar rejoinder is that the more we can know about the ideas which the great writer adopted the more accurate will be our valuation of his work in all its aspects, including his art. Yet this outcome is perhaps not very often apparent; we may understand and still forget to admire; and those who labour so profitably in the mines do not always seem greatly to improve their vision for the light and depth and colour of the finished jewels. There are, to put it bluntly, signs of too great a readiness to remain content with the easier discipline of noting the correspondences between Shakespeare, for example, and those numerous writers who said the same sort of thing before him.

One important result of these investigations is that we are now less tempted to cry 'stolen goods' when we see that one writer's thoughts have been anticipated, bating of course the instances in which the verbal similarity is too close to mean anything else. But there is the further risk of slipping into an assumption that virtually all of Shakespeare's *διάνοια* was commonplace, that he scarcely ever made his characters say anything that could even mildly surprise his audiences, that there is nothing greatly remarkable in the observations 'on man, on nature, and on human life' which we find in his plays beyond the rather slender achievement of what oft was thought but ne'er so well expressed. There might be some validity in a caricature of Shakespeare as the supreme master of cookery who could make even the stalest platitudes look fresh and attractive; but since there must be degrees in such matters it seems reasonable that we should try to perceive when a *locus communis* becomes something more, and that we should not restrict that something more to a command of literary form, knowing as we do that 'form' and 'substance' can submit to analysis but not to divorce, and that a truism can become a truth once more when the sentiment has been proved upon its author's pulses.

The uncommonplace in Shakespeare may also be of interest not so much because he could think for himself as because what is said may represent, instead of a widely-current concept, something vaguely emergent in the thought of his time, perhaps in the nature of a relatively neglected but now reviving trend of speculation, and certainly not current save in an extremely limited sense. Theodore Spencer does justice to the impact upon certain accepted notions, ascribing order and rationality to the cosmos, of newer ideas which for scientific or other reasons were calling that order in question. But we may suppose that Shakespeare could be affected by other types of thought than those which have been recognized in that connexion,

and it is well we should know as much as we can about these others. After what has been said above there should be little risk that the following paragraphs will be misinterpreted as yet another attempt to limit the scope of Shakespeare's originality. They are meant rather to hint at one possible field of enquiry into the 'background' which may deserve more attention than it has had, while at the same time showing how tenuous and shifting still must be the line between what Shakespeare might derive from his intellectual milieu and what his unaided thought might strike out for itself.

In any occurrence of a *locus communis* it will be desirable not merely to recognize it as such but to take account of the emotional or intellectual context—who speaks, who listens, and what sort of attitude the terms and tones of the reference may imply. We know that many of the commonplaces were theological, deriving from biblical, patristic, or liturgical sources. How far do references to these by Shakespeare's characters suggest acceptance, criticism, or indifference? What, for instance, of allusions to eschatological ideas, such as nearly everyone took for granted? It seems that these ideas could be employed for Shakespeare's various dramatic purposes either simply as accepted commonplaces having more or less rhetorical value, or with a view to comic effects, or again, in something like a spirit of criticism. Thus when Laertes (*Hamlet*, V. i. 263) says to the 'churlish priest',

A ministering angel shall my sister be  
When thou liest howling,

no exception to the doctrine of Hell is implied, unless the opinion we are meant to have of Laertes could convey something of that nature. A more frivolous reference (itself partaking of a well-established medieval habit of joking about doctrines seriously held) occurs when Falstaff addresses the Hostess (2 *Henry IV*, II. iv. 336): 'Marry, there is another indictment upon thee, for suffering flesh to be eaten in thy house, contrary to the law; for the which I think thou wilt howl.' But when Claudio in *Measure for Measure* (III. i. 127) alludes to the same notion (howling of the damned) he accompanies it with something which is not frivolous and which, whatever it is and whatever bearing it may have on Shakespeare's own beliefs, is hardly an ordinary commonplace. Claudio's catalogue of the distresses which may lie beyond the grave, beginning 'Ay, but to die and go we know not where', is meant to culminate in the words

or to be worse than worst  
Of those that lawless and incertain thought  
Imagine howling: 'tis too horrible.

Everything hitherto could be paralleled from earlier attempts to depict the horrors of the after-world. But how many people in Shakespeare's time

were ready to suggest or admit that such things are the simulacra of 'lawless and incertain thought'? The words are almost parenthetical and might even seem, to some members of the audience, to weaken Claudio's argument rhetorically; at least no strength is added to it by anything savouring of a doubt about the reality of his fears. A speck of foreign matter, it might be said, impedes for a second the smooth working of Shakespeare's impersonal dramatic technique. Even when the meaning is softened in Johnson's gloss, 'conjecture sent out to wander without any certain direction, and ranging through possibilities of pain', a sceptical intention is still apparent and seems to warrant further enquiry into any traditional or emergent thought by which this particular kind of speculative attitude might be encouraged.

We may turn back to the Duke's famous speech at the beginning of the same scene, advising Claudio to 'be absolute for death'. His consolatory arguments are mainly commonplaces which can be abundantly illustrated from Cicero, Seneca, and Plutarch onwards<sup>1</sup> to such modern compendia of wise sayings as Nicholas Ling's *Politeuphuia* (1597). The arguments may be chiefly of Stoical origin, but Stoics and Epicureans were not always at variance and it is sometimes impossible to say that a Renaissance writer is more indebted to one school than to the other. One of the thoughts, however, with which Claudio is recommended to admonish Life may fairly be supposed at least to glance at a more distinctively Epicurean doctrine:

Thou art not thyself;  
For thou exist'st on many thousand grains  
That issue out of dust.

The Epicurean atomic theory hardly affects Elizabethan literature before about 1600. Donne perhaps alludes to it in 'The Exstasie' (l. 47) and in 'The first Anniversary' (l. 210) where he speaks of the world being 'crumbled out againe to his Atomies'. But Shakespeare in several other passages may possibly show something of its influence, as when Macbeth (IV. i. 58) says to the Witches,

                  though the treasure  
Of nature's germen[s] tumble all together  
Even till destruction sicken, answer me . . .

or when Lear (III. ii. 7-8) bids the thunder

Crack nature's moulds, all germens spill at once  
That make ungrateful man!

(Shakespeare is the earliest writer quoted in *O.E.D.* for the use of 'germen' as a noun and it may be that he adopted it in the absence as yet of any generally established terminology.)<sup>2</sup> And Florizel (*The Winter's Tale*,

<sup>1</sup> See the article 'How great was Shakespeare's debt to Montaigne?' by Alice Harmon in *P.M.L.A.* vol. lvii, 1942, pp. 988-1008.      <sup>2</sup> 'Atom' was of course already in use.

IV. iv. 477-8) employs similar imagery in connexion with the cataclysm which the violation of his faith would mean: then, he says,

Let nature crush the sides o' the earth together  
And mar the seeds within.

It is noticeable that in all those three instances the seeds or germens are associated with Nature. That may be a coincidence, but whether it is significant or not it would still be true that the most obvious and likely ultimate source of such ideas would be the *De Rerum Natura*, in which the doctrines of Epicurus were expounded and made poetically vital by Lucretius's eagerly responsive imagination. If only Florizel had said 'Let nature crush the *flaming walls* o' the earth' we might have drawn a more definite conclusion!

But the Elizabethans had taken far less notice of Lucretius than of other Latin poets. There had been no English translation of his work and few signs before 1600 of any real interest in the original Latin. Moreover, as has been pointed out,<sup>1</sup> the collectors of commonplaces *de contemptu mortis* had rather tended to avoid him, probably because his attitude to death was so palpably unorthodox. On the other hand, Spenser translated the opening lines of Lucretius's invocation to Venus (*D.R.N.*, I. 1-25) in *The Faerie Queene*, IV. x. 45-47<sup>2</sup>; Montaigne, too, in his *Essays* (Florio's translation appeared in 1603) cites or refers to Lucretius over a hundred times, and Montaigne must certainly be allowed some part in the popularizing of Epicurean ideas. Bacon knew Lucretius, and Burton quotes him frequently.<sup>3</sup> Was it then by reminiscence or out of Shakespeare's more or less unaided thought that one of the best-known of these ideas ('nil posse creari de nihilo') is reborn in *King Lear*?

Fool. Can you make no use of nothing, nuncle?

Lear. Why, no, boy; nothing can be made out of nothing.

(I. iv. 141.)<sup>4</sup>

It begins to seem admissible that Lucretius, at first or second or tenth hand, may have been among the influences which affected Shakespeare during his mainly tragic period. Such a sententia as that just quoted could hardly be reckoned among the *loci communes*, because it is not common enough. Indeed it runs counter to the generally accepted doctrine that God did create the world out of nothing. We are certainly not bound, or even entitled, to assume that Shakespeare must here have been indebted to Lucretius. But once the possibility can be countenanced it becomes tempting to ask whether some of the more popular commonplaces appearing in

<sup>1</sup> By Alice Harmon, *loc. cit.*, p. 1000.

<sup>2</sup> See the article 'Spenser and Lucretius' by Edwin Greenlaw in *University of North Carolina Studies in Philology*, vol. xvii (1920), pp. 439-64.

<sup>3</sup> See *Lucretius and his influence*, by G. D. Hadzsits (1935), pp. 306-7.

<sup>4</sup> I am indebted at this point to Dr. D. J. Gordon, who further observes that this speech derives a special salience from Lear's analogous remark in I. i. 90: 'Nothing will come of nothing'.

his work may not have been at least reinforced by the incidence of Lucretius's poem upon Elizabethan thought. Thus Lear's saying to Gloucester (IV. vi. 183-5),

Thou must be patient; we came crying hither:  
Thou know'st the first time that we smell the air  
We waul and cry,

may be a characteristic medieval reflexion, but it is worth observing that Lucretius has the same thought, with a similar implication that man is born for subsequent trouble as well:

tum porro puer, ut saevis proiectus ab undis  
navita, nudus humi iacet infans indigus omni  
vitali auxilio, cum primum in luminis oras  
nixibus ex alvo matris natura profudit,  
vagituque locum lugubri complet, ut aequumst  
cui tantum in vita restet transire malorum.

(*D.R.N.*, V. 222-7)

Similarly some of the notions recommended by the Duke to Claudio are at least as near to Lucretius the heretic, as they are to Seneca, whose aid was generally more acceptable to Christian apologists:

Thy best of rest is sleep,  
And that thou oft provok'st; yet grossly fear'st  
Thy death, which is no more.

nec sibi enim quisquam tum se vitamque requiret,  
cum pariter mens et corpus sopita quiescunt;  
nam licet aeternum per nos sic esse soporem,  
nec desiderium nostri nos adicit ullum.

(*D.R.N.*, III. 919-22)

Happy thou art not;  
For what thou hast not, still thou striv'st to get,  
And what thou hast, forget'st.

sed dum abest quod avemus, id exsuperare videtur  
cetera; post aliud, cum contigit illud, avemus  
et sitis aequa tenet vitai semper hiantis.

(*D.R.N.*, III. 1082-4)

Thou hast nor youth nor age,  
But, as it were, an after-dinner's sleep,  
Dreaming on both . . .

mortua cui vita est prope iam vivo atque videnti,  
qui somno partem maiorem conteris aevi,  
et vigilans stertis nec somnia cernere cessas.

(*D.R.N.*, III. 1046-8)

But Claudio, who was but superficially persuaded by the Duke's arguments, is soon thrown off his temporary balance when a real chance of escape seems to present itself; and in his fearful anticipations of what death may mean—



Ay, but to die, and go we know not where;  
 To lie in cold obstruction and to rot;  
 This sensible warm motion to become  
 A kneaded clod; and the delighted spirit  
 To bathe in fiery floods, or to reside  
 In thrilling region of thick-ribbed ice;  
 To be imprison'd in the viewless winds,  
 And blown with restless violence round about  
 The pendent world. . . .

—he reflects, with some exactness, the mental state of the man who, according to Lucretius, has failed to banish care because he cannot use himself to the thought of complete extinction:

Proinde ubi se videas hominem indignarier ipsum,  
 post mortem fore ut aut putescat corpore posto  
 aut flammis interfiat malisve ferarum,  
 scire licet non sincerum sonere atque subesse  
 caecum aliquem cordi stimulum, quamvis neget ipse  
 credere se quemquam sibi sensum in morte futurum;  
 non, ut opinor, enim dat quod promittit et unde  
 nec radicatus e vita se tollit et eicit,  
 sed facit esse sui quiddam super inciscus ipse.

(*D.R.N.*, III. 870-8, cf. 888-93)

A state of mind comparable with Claudio's at this point is represented in the most famous of Hamlet's soliloquies. Hamlet's thoughts are less concrete and sensational than Claudio's, for Hamlet goes no further than to speak of dreams which may trouble our rest, 'the dread of something after death', and the natural hesitation to fly to other ills than those we know of. He takes into account as a theoretical possibility that to die may be to sleep—no more, and is at one with Lucretius (through Montaigne?) in recognizing conscience as a factor in our apprehensions of what may remain when we have shuffled off this mortal coil:

at mens sibi conscia factis  
 praemetuens adhibet stimulos torretque flagellis,  
 nec videt interea qui terminus esse malorum  
 possit nec quae sit poenarum denique finis,  
 atque eadem metuit magis haec ne in morte gravescant.

(*D.R.N.*, III. 1018-22)

To make little of death because life itself has little to offer was a deeply-ingrained habit of medieval philosophy; and Lucretius was certainly not the only non-Christian moralist to put the case that death should have no terrors for us because there is no existence beyond the grave. Several, moreover, of Hamlet's incidental thoughts and phrases have been illustrated from Catullus, Seneca, Cardan and others, with no necessary implication that Shakespeare must have drawn upon any such sources. Nevertheless it is true that most of the considerations which Hamlet

weighs can be found in the *De Rerum Natura*, including the thought, elsewhere in the play of great importance to Hamlet, that there is no returning from the bourn of death once it has been reached. Lucretius was much interested in supposed visions of departed spirits, which he explains in his own materialistic fashion,

ne forte animas Acherunte reamur  
effugere aut umbras inter vivos volitare  
neve aliquid nostri post mortem posse relinqui.

(*D.R.N.*, IV. 37-9)

But Hamlet is not convinced, and his whole speech might be described as the balanced deliberation of a Christian philosopher who has faced and even been attracted by the Lucretian doctrine, but cannot think it valid. He still harbours, and believes it right to harbour, some of that 'metus Acheruntis' which, as 'lawless and incertain thought', the Latin poet had hoped to dispel by the light of reason and nature:

hunc igitur terrorem animi tenebrasque necessest  
non radii solis neque lucida tela diei  
discutiant, sed naturae species ratioque.

(*D.R.N.*, I. 146-8; repeated, III. 91-3)

There are similarities also, as Professor H. G. Wright points out, between the thoughts of Lucretius on change, decay, and transformation, and those of Hamlet in IV. iii. 20-33 ('we fat all creatures to fat us, and we fat ourselves for maggots . . .'), V. i. 225-38 (Alexander and the bung-hole; 'Imperious Caesar, dead and turn'd to clay . . .'), and, less clearly, Hamlet's own desire (I. ii. 129-30) that 'this too too solid flesh would melt, Thaw and resolve itself into a dew'. The following passages in Lucretius are relevant: I. 250-64, 543-7, 809-22, and, perhaps especially, II. 874-82:

Praeterea cunctas itidem res vertere sese.  
vertunt se fluvii in frondes et pabula laeta  
in pecudes, vertunt pecudes in corpora nostra  
naturam, et nostro de corpore saepe ferarum  
augescunt vires et corpora pennipotentum.  
ergo omnes natura cibos in corpora viva  
vertit et hinc sensus animantium procreat omnes,  
non alia longe ratione atque arida ligna  
explicat in flammam et <in> ignis omnia versat.

and II. 1002-6:

nec sic interemit mors ut res materiali  
corpora conficiat, sed coetum dissipat ollis:  
inde aliis aliud coniungit et efficit, omnis  
res ut convertant formas mutantque colores  
et capiant sensus et puncto tempore reddant. . . .

We need not attribute to Shakespeare any of the thought which he attributes to Hamlet, since Shakespeare was a playwright and not an

expositor of ideas for their own sake; yet it seems unlikely that Hamlet's speculation on the afterlife meant much less to Shakespeare than, say, Hamlet's advice to the players on how to act 'The Mousetrap'. Nor can we assert that Lucretius and not some more diffused influences, if any, must have been at work to produce these effects. After all, Seneca could quote Lucretius. But it would not be very surprising to learn that round about 1600 someone or something<sup>1</sup> drew Shakespeare's attention to the *De Rerum Natura* or to parts of it (possibly in manuscript translation) and that this gave reinforcement to ideas already nascent or active in his mind. If Spenser could translate Lucretius's poem, Shakespeare also might have some acquaintance with it. To say more would be unsafe until better evidence is available. We know too little about the extent to which late Elizabethan and early Jacobean literature was affected by sceptical thought although we know that such thought was abroad;<sup>2</sup> and we can only conjecture what bearing, for instance, it may have had upon Shakespeare's increased pre-occupation with tragedy in the first years of the seventeenth century. The conjecture, however, is not without its interest if only because it seems to be a condition of the most effective tragedy that ideas of compensation in another world for the evils of this one should not intrude, or at least not be prominent; and the sceptical mood or influence could play its part in keeping these in abeyance.

Perhaps, however, the best reason we can have at present for associating Shakespeare and Lucretius is that we may thus be led to compare in all its features the work of two poets in two distant ages born, each of whom was very content to borrow ideas from earlier thinkers but who both made what they borrowed their own; and who showed again, in ways we may try to fathom, that 'sublimity' is no matter of mere thought or mere decoration but thought and words, substance and form, collaborating to sound 'the note that rings from a great mind'.

<sup>1</sup> It is possible that Giordano Bruno's interest in Lucretius as the upholder of atomism and the infinity of space may have been indirectly communicated to Shakespeare. I am again indebted for this suggestion to Professor H. G. Wright, who observes that Bruno quotes freely from Lucretius in Italian works written while he was in England; that Bruno was probably indebted to Lucretius in the Latin *De Immenso* (1591), where he attempts to set forth what we should now call the 'scientific' conceptions of the day; and that Bruno's writings (see Miss F. A. Yates's *Study of Love's Labour's Lost*, pp. 92-4) were certainly known in England c. 1590-1610. Professor Wright also refers to Nicholas Hill's *Philosophia Epicurea, Democritiana, Theophrastica* (1601 and 1619), mentioned by Ben Jonson in *Epigrams*, No. 134. Hill had matriculated at St. John's College, Oxford, in 1587, very shortly after Bruno's visit there.

<sup>2</sup> There is a Lucretian ring about the opinion attributed to Marlowe 'that the first beginning of religion was only to keep men in awe' and about the remark of his Dr. Faustus: 'I think hell's a fable'. Sir John Davies devotes many stanzas of *Nosce Teipsum* (1599) to refuting Epicurean objections against the immortality of the soul, in a way which seems to bear out the statement by Bishop Thomas Cooper in his *Admonition to the people of England* (1589), p. 118, that 'the schoole of Epicure, and the Atheists, is mightily increased in these dayes'.

## CHAPMAN'S 'SENECAL MAN'

### A STUDY IN JACOBEOAN PSYCHOLOGY

By MICHAEL H. HIGGINS

Swinburne complained that Chapman's tragedies contain 'an incessant by-play of incongruous digressions', and he deplored the lack of any perceptible centre towards which 'these tangled and ravelled lines of thought' may seem at least to converge. It is true that Chapman's artistic mastery of his material is often very incomplete. So intent is he on enforcing particular lessons of conduct that he will strive to achieve his moral effects by a series of particular incidents, specially designed to illustrate them, rather than by a careful choice of theme and character<sup>1</sup> out of which they might arise naturally. But the 'tangled and ravelled lines of thought' have historic and literary connexions with stoicism in drama. The tragedies of Chapman traverse the same ground as the aulic plays of Daniel, Greville, and Alexander, and they exhibit moral and political notions akin to those found in Buchanan's plays. Chapman is interested in problems of fundamental justice, in the nature of sovereignty and the origin of Law. His plays illustrate the qualities of the just ruler, the character and duty of an upright subject, and the relationship of the Governor to the Governed. The energies of humanism were already turning away from the first excitement of uncontrolled individualism to the problems of how rightly to organize and govern a state. In the whole range of Jacobean drama there are no more definite statements on these topics than those found in Chapman's six later tragedies. Nor, despite occasional ambiguities of phrase and the grim perils which the Jacobean censorship involved, can there be much doubt where Chapman's true sympathies lay. The admirers of classical antiquity had always before them the example of an aristocratic republic, of governance by oligarchy rather than by monarchy. The great political division of the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was due to a variety of causes, economic, social and religious; it would, however, be true to say that the different mental outlook and political view which created Whiggism and Toryism, long before the development of parliamentary institutions gave them those names, were already represented by two opposing parties in the state. Admiration for the pagan virtues and for the civilization of Rome

<sup>1</sup> E.g. the change in character of the Guise, the ridiculous conduct of Montsurry, and the anomalous position of the Ghost of Bussy d'Ambois.

encouraged republican sentiment, while belief in absolute monarchy and in the religious sanctions which hedge the doctrine, was medieval and mystical in conception.<sup>1</sup> In later years Kenelm Digby's *Broadstone of Honour*, Bolingbroke's *Patriot King*, Disraeli's *Young England* are 'each worlds away from the cool logic of republican rationalism which is the political aspect of the Whig classical tradition. In Jacobean times this distinction rests to a greater extent on temperament, but the union of philosophical and political interest in Chapman's plays shows a readiness to draw political as well as moral lessons from ancient history. If the stoics could provide a philosophy for the seventeenth century, why should they not also be worthy of imitation in the temporal sphere? In so far as the Roman play of the period holds up to admiration the republican virtues of Roman senators, it is criticizing the extreme monarchist position of Jacobean times. When Cato prays to see

the Consuls' souls  
That slew themselves so nobly, scorning life  
Led under tyrants' sceptres . . .

Chapman is repeating the anti-tyranny cry of Buchanan and his successors. When he carries these doctrines into plays of contemporary life, and the scene is no longer ancient Rome but the France of the Counter-Reformation, then it may be assumed that Chapman means the message to be applicable to his own generation. He becomes a political precursor of Milton and Locke, an opponent of that medieval and Catholic reverence for the sacred name of King.

It seems probable that *Caesar and Pompey* and *Revenge of Bussy D'Ambois* were written about the same time, at a date between the years 1610 and 1613. The true hero of the former play is Cato, among the most admired of the heroes of antiquity. Chapman was never oppressed by the ancient stoics' doubt as to the possibility of a truly wise man existing. With a livelier faith than theirs he depicted three such examples of stoic perfection realized in human form: Cato the wise counsellor, Chabot the wise subject, Clermont, answering the doubts, passions, and perplexing fears of Hamlet by perfect wisdom, perfect tranquillity and perfect courage. These three characters embody a common philosophic concept and have no part or lot in contemporary psychological drama as it was being developed by Shakespeare, Middleton, and Webster. In *Caesar and Pompey* two familiar themes of contemporary interest are handled: the unwise and unjust King whose rule is based, not on reason and justice, but on a tyranny which offends the rational order of the Universe: and the wise subject who clearly understands what is and is not due to sovereignty. Just as Chabot

<sup>1</sup> But see Figgis's *Divine Right of Kings* and J. Dover Wilson's Preface to *Richard II* (New Cambridge Shakespeare).



has clear ideas on the duty owed to Monarchy,<sup>1</sup> so Cato is also a moralist who can 'act and comprehend'. It is Chapman's delight to present to his contemporaries the spectacle of men who can move with assurance in the loftiest planes of thought and action. No problem of political conduct, of metaphysical speculation or moral behaviour is too deep for them. They have the absolute certitude which springs from perfect intellectual and spiritual balance. So complete is their knowledge, so prepared are they for the various misfortunes which can strike mankind in their mortal career, that there is no room left in their system for speculation or compromise of any sort. So entirely adequate is their explanation for their every thought and action that there is no mystery left to be plucked from their more than human hearts. Thus Cato and Chabot are men *justi et tenaces* whom no threat of tyranny or impending injustice can deflect from the course of action which reason has proposed to them as right.

Is not every just man to himself  
The perfectest law?<sup>2</sup>

Nor can they deign to serve any king whose rule does not observe these abstract principles of justice which their own individual judgments find good and fair.

I serve not you for them, but for yourself,  
And that good in your rule that justice does you;  
And care not this what others say so you  
Please but to do me right for what you know.<sup>3</sup>

The main point around which these political discussions of Chapman's political tragedies revolve is the attempt to determine where in the modern state is the fount of authority, law and justice. This is the theme of *Chabot*, the dutiful subject who values all the honours and favours conferred on him by his king not for the glory and wealth they bring but because 'they uphold my will, my will being just'.<sup>4</sup>

It is this view of the individual as a being morally and intellectually independent of the mass of mankind, enabled by pure reason, without reference to any external authority, to determine what is and is not due to kings and established institutions, which Chapman makes the basis of his studies of stoic personality. It is true that in the Byron tragedies he defends the established monarchic state, and in all his political plays he maintains the view that:

Subjects are bound to suffer, not contest  
With princes, since their will and acts must be  
Accounted one day to a judge supreme.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> His judgment nor his favours I respect  
So I preserve his justice.

(*Chabot*, II, ii.)

<sup>2</sup> *Caesar and Pompey*, IV, iii.

<sup>3</sup> *Caesar and Pompey*, II, iii. Cf. also the discussions between Chabot and King in Act II of *Chabot*.

<sup>4</sup> *Chabot*, II.

<sup>5</sup> *Chabot*, III.

The fact remains that the whole language and argument of Cato, Clermont and Chabot are instinct with the spirit of classical republicanism. In Clermont 'Rome's Brutus is revived', and all three characters are in aristocratic isolation from the vulgar many-headed multitude. Their moral attitude towards society and towards all authority which they cannot justify by human reason is filled with the distinctive Renaissance spirit of Buchanan and Milton. This moral self-sufficiency is carried to a frank self-praise by Cato:

But I have ever been in every justice,  
Better than Caesar, and was never conquered  
Or made to fly for life as Caesar was,  
But have been victor even to my wish.<sup>1</sup>

This Renaissance doctrine of the divinity of man is carried to its furthest point by the suicides of Cato and Clermont. Both Cato and Clermont are prepared to carry their faith in their own vision of Supreme Reason even to the point of death, since tyranny was one of the conditions which according to the ancients made life unbearable:

All just men  
Not only may enlarge their lives but must,  
From all rule tyrannous, or live unjust.<sup>2</sup>

Suicide is to Chapman as to many Jacobean the supreme example of the stoic conquest of fear. Cato welcomes death as 'sleep's natural brother', untroubled by Hamlet's brooding fear of 'dreams to come'. Like Cleopatra, he has immortal longings in him:

The consuls' souls,  
That slew themselves so nobly, scorning life  
Led under tyrants' sceptres, mine would see.  
For we shall know each other and past death  
Retain those forms of knowledge learned in life . . .  
The earth, the air and seas I know and all  
The joys and honours of their peace and wars  
And now we'll see the God's state and the stars.<sup>3</sup>

In *Revenge of Bussy D'Ambois* and in *Chabot* we are introduced to contemporary stoics. Both plays are dramatic analogues with the moral treatises of Reformation times, and with those books of political and social counsel which form the main educational literature of the age. This didactic purpose is very evident in the play *Chabot*, which is essentially an academic exercise, designed to prove that God is the author of all justice, and that wise men may know justice better than kings. While the principle of monarchy is nowhere attacked, this doctrine contained the philosophical seed of the civil war of a quarter of a century later. The argument of the

<sup>1</sup> *Caesar and Pompey*, IV, iv.

<sup>3</sup> *Caesar and Pompey*, V, ii.

<sup>2</sup> *Caesar and Pompey*, IV, iii.

play is supported by several long trial scenes written in a very pedestrian prose. Such is Chabot's passion for justice that he will not accept from the king a pardon for sentence of death unjustly brought against him.<sup>1</sup> After a triumphant vindication, he dies of a broken heart in an attitude of loyalty to the king who has wronged the sacred principle of justice which he represents. The play is seldom illuminated by psychological insight, and is little more than a dramatic homily on the wise man's duty to worship justice and truth and never to 'Force untruths upon his soul'. On the other hand the character and course of action of Clermont D'Ambois, the 'Senecal' Revenger of *Revenge of Bussy D'Ambois*, challenge at once our interest and attention since they are obviously related to the most famous of all the Revenge group of plays, Shakespeare's *Hamlet*. Moreover, Chapman is here attempting a full-length study of the stoic sage placed in the corrupt modern world in which

Flatteries and smoothe applause of things ill  
Uphold the inordinate swindge of downright power.<sup>2</sup>

Both Hamlet and Clermont D'Ambois wear:

The crowne of man and all his parts  
Which learning is.<sup>3</sup>

Both are types of the complete man of Renaissance idealism; each is possessed of 'the courtier's, soldier's, scholar's eye, tongue, sword'; they are men of true 'noblesse', aristocrats in a moral as well as in a social sense. Essentially men of intellect, both are placed in a situation which demands qualities of action and decision. Both are isolated figures in a world in which evil purposes and evil men preponderate over good. The contrast which Chapman seeks to make between these two philosopher Revengers is plain: Hamlet's difficulties come in the main from within; 'The oscillation between extremes of frenzy and tranquillity is so marked a feature of the Prince's behaviour and provides so large an element of the rhythm of the whole play, that to miss it is to miss one of the principal clues to the understanding of Hamlet.'<sup>4</sup> The psychology of passion had been one of the main themes of Jacobean tragedy. We see the more extreme forms of the passionate hero in Marston's two tragedies. Shakespeare returns to the theme again and again; Lear and Othello are men seeking to find a drop of patience in their soul to allay the fever of 'hysterica passio'. So Hamlet is punished with a 'sore distraction'; though he is not 'splenative and rash' yet he has in him 'something dangerous' and he is ready to proclaim his former madness.<sup>5</sup> He knows he is one of those who carry 'the stamp of one defect',

<sup>1</sup> *Chabot*, IV.

<sup>2</sup> *Revenge of Bussy D'Ambois*, I, i.

<sup>3</sup> *Revenge of Bussy D'Ambois*, I, i.

<sup>4</sup> J. Dover Wilson, Preface to *Hamlet* (New Cambridge Shakespeare).

<sup>5</sup> *Hamlet*, V, ii.

and that defect is passion which acts in disobedience to reason, due to the

O'er growth of some complexion  
Oft breaking down the pales and forts of reason.<sup>1</sup>

His very actions proclaim the defect in his spiritual equilibrium. So vivid and intense is his apprehension of evil, of sin and of suffering, that he must needs express himself in violent and irrational acts.<sup>2</sup> Passion strives with Reason for the mastery of his soul. He has therefore the attitude of a man at once intellectual and passionate towards Horatio's philosophy. He admires his stoicism because it preaches the supremacy of reason, thus creating a state of repose to which his own fiery temper and restless spirit can never gain access. As a sceptic in the Christian tradition he smiles at Horatio's certitude which narrows the area over which the intellect can freely range.<sup>3</sup> He can admire the qualities which Horatio possesses since he knows all too well his own lack of them, but he sees them rather as the attribute of a certain temperament, than as attainable by adherence to a mildly optimistic species of rationalism. He is the classic example of those heroes who

. . . if they set not downe  
Decrees within them, for disposing these,  
Of judgment, resolution, uprightnesse,  
And certain knowledge of their use and ends,  
Mishap and miserie no lesse extends  
To their destruction . . .<sup>4</sup>

Clermont d'Ambois is the man of achieved virtue and goodness, one who holds that 'all learning is but an act to live well'. With a soul 'more ingenuous, searching, and judicial' than his brother's, he is the ideal sage of antiquity born again in the world of modern Europe. His virtues are brought into contrast with the machiavellian Monsieur, a noble without noblesse, one of those

enabled only by the goods they have  
To scorne all goodnesse.

Clermont can explain the very principles of human duty, he is an object lesson in conduct, his every action and speech contain a sermon. The intellectual sources of his character are entirely stoic; his faith is summed up in the lines:

In this one thing all the discipline  
Of manners and of manhood is contained,  
A man to join himself with the Universe  
In his main sway, and make (in all things fit)  
One with that All.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Hamlet*, I, iv.

<sup>2</sup> *Hamlet*, I, iv; II, ii; III, iv.

<sup>3</sup> *Hamlet*, I, v.

<sup>4</sup> *Revenge of Bussy D'Ambois*, III, iv.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, IV, i.

Every virtue and grace of character with which Chapman endows his hero is a testimony to his abiding love for antiquity. Clermont is thus 'like an inhabitant of some academe from Greece or old Rome rather than a Frenchman of the Catholic Reaction'.<sup>1</sup> Rome's Brutus is revived in him and in him the 'Senecal man' is discovered:

Hee may with heaven's immortall powers compare  
To whom the day and Fortune equal are,  
Come fair or foul, whatever chance can fall  
Fix't in himself, hee still is one to all.<sup>2</sup>

Above all, it is in Clermont's conquest of fear, through obedience to reason, in his absolute tranquillity in the midst of all the changes and chances of this mortal life that Chapman seeks to make a dramatic contrast with the familiar Renaissance hero of passion. These two concepts of abandonment to emotional expression and of extreme control had exercised their influence on the development of Jacobean psychology. With them Kyd and Marston had made their crude but effective contrasts, Shakespeare had shown the two forces struggling for mastery in one personality,<sup>3</sup> or opposed to one another in emotional conflict.<sup>4</sup> But no such extreme example of fortitude, patience and self-sufficiency had appeared before the creation of Clermont D'Ambois. He is the man who has realized in full the command of Marcus Aurelius to live a life 'conformed to nature'.<sup>5</sup> He is in constant communion with the Universe, conceived rather in the terms of Fichte's moral world-order; in the second sense he is free from the irrational desires of lust, power, wealth, and all other temptations of the external world, as also from doubts, hesitations, fears and speculations coming from the inner world of mind and spirit. His system is as positive as Calvinism itself; he can suffer all things, because he can explain all things; no mystery is too profound for him, no moral problem too delicate; everything fits into its appointed place in the stoic scheme. Holding the keys of knowledge of good and evil, the supremacy of reason in him may 'With heaven's immortal powers compare'. With all the apparent valour and energy of a Renaissance aristocrat Clermont in truth is an example of stoic *ἀνάθεια*; desires in so far as they are bare feelings are no motives to him; he can only be guided to actions by the desires of reason, arising out of his conception of the essential unity and rationality of life and the Universe. Never do we see in him 'the flash and outbreak of a fiery mind'. Feelings as psychical states the stoic-sage may experience, but they do not in any way disturb or unhinge him. Clermont, like his brother stoic Horatio, never has thoughts beyond the reaches of his soul; his intellect with absolute control of his emotions moves securely within the narrow

<sup>1</sup> F. S. Boas, Preface to *Bussy D'Ambois*, IV, i.

<sup>2</sup> *Revenge of Bussy D'Ambois*, IV, v.

<sup>4</sup> Brutus and Cassius, Iago and Othello.

<sup>3</sup> Lear, Othello, Hamlet.

<sup>5</sup> Aurelius's *Meditations*, X, 15.



limits of his stoic creed. Filled with proselytizing zeal he is only too ready to show us how to bear

the spurns  
That patient merit of the unworthy takes.

Nowhere are the defects of the stoic system of moral psychology more fully revealed than in the character of Clermont D'Ambois. Shakespeare has breathed life into the stoic Horatio; we feel his humanity in his very simplicity, in the innocent vanity with which he parades his new religion. It is in the passivity of the stoic character that its essential inhumanity is shown. It creates in the stoic a sense of moral ascendancy over his fellows,<sup>1</sup> a spiritual pride which is observable in Milton and other great men of the seventeenth century. Both Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius frequently advise us to take no heed of the man who harms us, inasmuch as he has no power to hurt our soul.<sup>2</sup> Here obviously generosity sinks into spiritual pride or a passive acquiescence in wrong-doing. This doctrine of 'adiaphora' or 'indifferent things' is illustrated in the character of Clermont in its most unbending form, teaching him to profess a contempt for the body, which was numbered among the 'adiaphora' and conceived as alien to man, a clog, and a hindrance. 'What am I?' says Epictetus. 'A poor soul laden with a corpse.'<sup>3</sup> With the body, death also is reckoned a thing indifferent. For the Christian, God is the governor of the soul and He alone can order its release. The stoic, logically pantheistic, identifies his soul with God and can therefore himself decide the hour and manner of its despatch. Clermont's motive for suicide is not different from Horatio's:

So, now my master calls, my ship, my venture  
All in one bottom put, all quite put off,

- ' In all successes Fortune and the day  
To mee alike are; I am fixt, be shee  
Never so fickle, and will there repose  
Farre past the reach of any dye she throwes.  
(*Revenge of Bussey D'Ambois*, III, iv.)
- And again: Who ever saw me differ in acceptance of eyther Fortune?  
(*Revenge of Bussey D'Ambois*, IV, v.)
- ' All worthy men should ever bring their bloud  
To beare all ill, not to be wreaked with good.  
(*Revenge of Bussey D'Ambois*, III, ii.)
- And again: Tyrants may kill but never hurt a man,  
All to his good makes, spite of death and hell.  
(*Revenge of Bussey D'Ambois*, V, i.)

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Chapman's Christian phrase in Guise's

a man  
Built with God's finger and enstild his temple.  
(*Revenge of Bussey D'Ambois*, I, i.)

with Guise's stoical doctrine:

would any spirit,  
Free, manly, princely, wish to live to be  
Commanded by this mass of slavery?  
(V, iv.)

Gone under saile, and I left negligent  
 To all the horrors of the visious time,  
 The farre remov'd shores to all vertuous aimes,  
 None favouring goodnesse, none but he respecting  
 Piete or manhood.<sup>1</sup>

The first objection to occur in the mind of Hamlet to suicide is a religious one: 'the Almighty has fixed his canon 'gainst self-slaughter'. For Cato and Clermont suicide is the final act of a supremely logical existence. They do not, as Hamlet does, recognize any authority superior to their private judgment.

The character of Clermont D'Ambois is the most complete analysis of stoic psychology and ethics attempted in the English drama, and affords striking evidence of the interest in stoicism which had grown up during the sixteenth century. It is, however, only in the sage's rare moments of humour and tenderness that he becomes credible as a human being. The stoics thought of mankind as wholly good or wholly foolish, seeking to attain for certain elected souls among men moral and spiritual perfection here and now. If it is true that the drama holds up the mirror of truth to life and nature, then the frigid personality and stilted thought of Clermont D'Ambois is sufficient evidence that the stoic philosophy carries us into a moral atmosphere where there is no habitable city for the mind of man.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Revenge of Bussy D'Ambois*, V, v. Cf. *Hamlet*, V, ii; also *Lear*, V, iii:

I have a journey shortly, Sir, to go.

<sup>2</sup> The nineteenth century held a different view. Renan calls Aurelius 'the gospel for those who do not believe in the supernatural . . . an absolute religion'. Leslie Stephen expresses the rationalist sympathy with Aurelius rather than with St. Paul. Matthew Arnold turned to it as a form of moral Christianity cleansed of elements for which he felt a distaste. Lord Avebury recommended Aurelius and Epictetus to the Working Men's Colleges in London, and in our time Sir Richard Livingstone has put in a plea for the reading of stoic philosophy by those who 'are capable of thinking at all about life'.

## THE AUTHORSHIP OF *THE WELSH EMBASSADOR*

By BERTRAM LLOYD<sup>1</sup>

*The Welsh Ambassador*, an anonymous play apparently written about the year 1623, exists in a manuscript now in the Cardiff Public Library; it was first printed from a transcript by Professor H. Littledale and published in 1921 by the Malone Society, edited by Professor Littledale and Dr. W. W. Greg. Their introduction to the edition gives what is known of the history of the manuscript. In the following paper all references are to this edition—not the least valuable of the services rendered by the Malone Society to Elizabethan scholarship. No contemporary allusions to the play have yet been discovered, but from internal evidence the editors deem that the manuscript had been prepared for the stage and presumably originated as a playhouse transcription, and that it is written in the hand of a professional scribe.<sup>2</sup> This comedy, poor as it is, is of interest, both on account of its authorship and its remarkable connexion with the tragedy called *The Noble Soldier* (printed 1634).

The editors discuss the possibility of composite authorship; but though they doubt this, stating that the author gives no clue to his identity, they suggest that perhaps the publication of the play 'may in time lead to his identification'. They aver that the author seems to have taken some hints for his comic Welshman and Irishman from Shakespeare, adding, however, that 'He may have had Middleton rather than Shakespeare before him: the *Mayor of Queenborough* is a play of kindred type to this one, and Middleton, like our author, alludes to "the Welsh ambassador" as a nickname for the cuckoo (l. 1500, and *A Trick to catch the Old One*, IV. v. 173)'.

But apart from considerations of palaeography I think the internal evidence points to composite authorship. Nor, I think, do the comic Irishman and Welshman bear any resemblance to those of Shakespeare, though they are exactly of a piece with Dekker's frequent efforts in this

<sup>1</sup> This article was found among the papers of the late Bertram Lloyd, and transcribed by Mrs. Lloyd. In *R.E.S.*, vol. 3, 1927 (No. 11, July), pp. 304 ff., Mr. Lloyd had drawn attention to many striking similarities in *The Noble Soldier* (by S. R.) and *The Welsh Ambassador*, and had suggested that the former was 'largely Dekker's work', and that Dekker had 'considerably more than "a main finger" in *The Welsh Ambassador*'. In a note to that article Mr. Lloyd stated his intention of publishing 'in a detailed discussion of the authorship and text of *The Welsh Ambassador*' his reasons for attributing the play to Dekker. It is apparently this discussion, never published by him, that Mrs. Lloyd has transcribed. In publishing the article now, I must accept responsibility for any errors due to faulty transcription or slips of the pen; but I have endeavoured to check it throughout so far as the nature of the copy would permit. This task has been greatly lightened by the generous assistance of Dr. W. W. Greg, who read the article in galley. He must not, however, be held responsible for any errors that may still remain.—[Ed., *R.E.S.*]

<sup>2</sup> The handwriting is the same as that of the Dyce Collection manuscript of *The Parliament of Love*, writes Dr. Greg. [Cf. W. W. Greg, *Dramatic Documents from the Elizabethan Playhouses*, 1931, p. 279. Ed., *R.E.S.*]

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direction. Nor again, I think, is Middleton followed, for while it is true that *The Mayor of Queenborough* is a play of kindred type, both that and *The Welsh Ambassador* belong to a well-marked and pretty numerous group of romantic plays, with careless pseudo-historic background, which seem to have been popular on the Jacobean stage. (Rowley's *A Shoemaker*, for example, is another of the same class.) *The Welsh Ambassador* moreover belongs to another popular sub-class—that dealing with the sanctity of troth-plight, which includes *The Miseries of Inforst Marriage*, *The Broken Heart*, 'S.R.'s' *The Noble Soldier*, W. Sampson's *The Vowbreaker*, etc.

It is a poor jumbled play, a tragi-comedy (if we accept Fletcher's definition of that species, as given in his address to the reader prefixed to *The Faithful Shepherdess*, c. 1610) with little or no attempt at psychological treatment (save a little in two scenes, which as will be seen, are probably not Dekker's work) or character development. The main theme is the broken troth-plight of Athelstane King of England, and his attempt to emulate David's treatment of Uriah, and marry the widowed wife of one of his nobles. Thinly handled and quite insufficient to fill five acts, it is filled up with a dull sub-plot of disguises (a comic sham Welsh Ambassador, etc.) and a very dreary clown posing as a chronicler, who, as the editors suggest, is very likely intended to satirize some real personage like Anthony Munday.

A number of lines in the manuscript are lost or imperfect owing to abrasion, and the total of remaining perfect lines is, I think, well under 2,000 in number. Of the seventy printed pages of the Malone edition, about one-third are in prose; and the play contains about forty rhymed couplets, exclusive of the disguised Friar's long speech in Act V, which following a curious contemporary stage convention for casually introduced 'Friars', etc.<sup>1</sup>, is in rhyming octosyllabics.

The main purpose of this essay is to claim for Dekker the chief plot of the play, and at the same time to point out that though a poor thing it is not all his own; for there is assuredly another hand present, clearly discernible in at least two scenes, very unlike Dekker's work, which seem to me to bear strong resemblance to Ford's style. Indeed, after making all allowances for purely fortuitous resemblances in phraseology, metre, etc., it can at least be safely affirmed that Ford is the only *likely* writer of these scenes (Act III, iii, and V, i); and the likelihood of their being his is strengthened by the fact that just about this time (1620-1625) he was collaborating with Dekker (*Witch of Edmonton*; *Sun's Darling*; *Bristow Merchant*; *Fairy Knight*; *Keep the Widow Waking*; and, as some good critics think, *The Spanish Gipsy*).

<sup>1</sup> See also *Merry Devil of Edmonton*; *Everie Woman in her Humour*; *Lust's Dominion*; *The Maid of Honour*; *The Ghost*, etc.

Of actual external evidence connecting *The Welsh Ambassador* with Dekker, there is only a single very thin thread, I believe—the fact that his name appeared in the Stationers' Register in 1631 and again in 1633 as the author of *The Noble Soldier* (published in 1634 as by 'S.R.'). But I think there is sufficiently strong resemblance in style, treatment, and (particularly) vocabulary to satisfy any student of Dekker that that prolific journalist and playwright is mainly responsible for the play.

Since *The Welsh Ambassador* is now easily accessible to the reader, I shall not waste space here in detailing the very meagre plot and action; nor shall I deal with 'parallel passages', but shall confine myself to pointing out some of the more notable resemblances to Dekker's and Ford's known work. The former, as is well known, repeats himself in special mannerisms, stock phrases, etc., to a far greater extent than most of his contemporaries, save Massinger (and perhaps Chapman). We should look then for such repetitions here—and we find them in plenty. In fact the whole play is littered with Dekker's characteristic phraseology, puns, and 'word-volleys' (as H. Dugdale Sykes has excellently termed them), while there are examples of his careless, clumsy inversions, e.g. 'mee thinkst thou to chastize' (l. 573), and 'butt better spiritts mee guided' (l. 2255). As for the sham comic Irishman and Welshman who play so large a part, it is only necessary for the reader to compare them first with their stock stage brethren in the plays of Shakespeare, Heywood, 'R.A.', Jonson, etc., and afterwards with Dekker's own numerous gallery of such characters (e.g. in *Old Fortunatus*, *Patient Grissil*, *Satiromastix*, *Northward Ho*, *The Honest Whore* Pt. 2) to be assured that they are either genuine members of the Dekker family or the invention of some imitator so slavish that he could successfully capture even the utmost minutiae of his style.

The Welshman's vocabulary here includes the usual 'Tawsone', 'out a cry', 'kernicles' (= 'chronicles'), 'twinckling Welsh harp' (cf. *Patient Grissil*, etc.), while the Irishman, whose speeches are sprinkled throughout with 'I faatla' and 'Crees sa mee', talks to the King of 'dat sweet face a dine', recalling Bryan's 'dine own sweet face' in Dekker's *Honest Whore* Pt. 2 (I, ii, and III, i) and the 'dine none sweet selfe' of the sham Irishman in *Old Fortunatus*, to whom he is so closely akin; while the question and answer about Irish chimney-sweepers (ll. 1511-5) are found almost verbatim in the latter play (I, ii).

The style of this play (in the verse) shows, as is natural, most affinity to Dekker's later dramatic work—*The Wonder of a Kingdom*, and especially *Match me in London*—being far terser and less poetical, far more tired in fact than the early exuberance of *Old Fortunatus* and *The Honest Whore*. The King of Spain in *Match me* talks like a bargee, and is as unreal, abrupt and crude as his counterpart of England in *The Welsh Ambassador*, while



the Queen's language is not much better (or worse) than Carintha's in the latter play; and the general style of the old courtier Valasco, the father of the ill-used Queen, strongly recalls Cornwall (cf. for style, e.g. ll. 800-10 of *The Welsh Ambassador*) both in his style of speech and his treatment by his royal master. Indeed *Match me* is every bit as unreal and clumsy a play as *The Welsh Ambassador*. In both plays, it may be added, the King is decidedly coarse and crude in style—a quality which he shares with some of Dekker's kings, more particularly his close relation in *The Wonder of a Kingdom*.

Dekker, like Dickens, whom he resembles in so many other respects (hatred of prisons, humanitarianism, fondness for the downtrodden, vast fluency, overpathos, tendency to caricature characters), was usually unsuccessful in portraying courtly and aristocratic types of character.

As *The Welsh Ambassador* contains a character Penda (who plays the title rôle), son of the Duke of Cornwall, who assumes the name of Conon, it is perhaps worth mentioning that Henslowe paid Dekker and Drayton in October 1598 for a play entered as *Connan Prince of Cornwall* (see Greg's *Henslowe's Diary*, I. 97), though this is, perhaps, of small importance. Two of the character names, Eldred and Uffa (assumed), are reminiscent of the heroes of *A Shoemaker a Gentleman* (Eldred and Offa)—taken from Deloney's *The Gentle Craft*. The play contains few if any words or phrases not to be found in the voluminous acknowledged work of Dekker and Ford. There are virtually no oaths, and few interjections (always sparsely used by the former writer). Neither 'Tush' nor 'Tut' occurs, though 'Pish' (a favourite of Ford's) is found twice, and the very unusual 'Pshew' (for 'Pshaw') thrice. The only contemporary playwright I can recall who uses this is Davenport. On the other hand 'golden', an adjective of which Dekker was inordinately fond,<sup>1</sup> occurs at least nine times (though only once in the two scenes—making up about twelve pages out of the total seventy—which contain, I think, Ford's work).

I will now examine briefly the vocabulary and phrases and some of the more uncommon words for marks of Dekker's style and characteristic 'word-hoard,' following the order of the scenes (as indicated in the Malone Society's edition), leaving Act III, iii, and Act V, i (which I think are not by Dekker) for consideration later on.

#### ACT I, SC. I

We find here the phrase (used by a supposed murderer of his victim):  
'I . . . help'd to teare the scaffoldings downe that did support his

<sup>1</sup> It is far more frequent in his works than in those of his collaborators, e.g. Middleton, Massinger, Ford, Webster, etc. He uses it e.g. of *baits, hooks, threads, slumbers, arrows, nets, arms, feathers, happiness, wings, majesty, flames, scales*, etc., as well as in many more usual connexions.

life . . .'. Dekker used this figure several times. The *Oxford English Dictionary's* earliest reference for the scarce, figurative use of 'scaffoldings' is *The Virgin Martyr* II, 3 (a Dekker scene) and it occurs in *The Noble Soldier* I, as well as in *The Whore of Babylon* somewhat similarly.<sup>1</sup>

The phrase 'a whole *masse* of kingdomes' (l. 97) is likely to be the scribe's error for '*messe*', though as the editors state that the 'a' of '*masse*' resembles a 'u', it is possible that '*musse*' is intended.<sup>2</sup> But 'a messe of kingdomes' occurs here again in II, ii; and this uncommon use of '*messe*' (for 'dish', 'meal') is found in Dekker's *Match me in London* III, 'served with a messe of kingdomes' (of languages), and in his *The Wonderful Yere* (1603, sig. C.), the latter being the *Oxford English Dictionary's* earliest reference for this figurative usage. It also occurs in *The Noble Soldier*.

#### ACT I, SC. II

. . . . are the *Destinies*  
your spinsters, that when you cry cutt that thred  
'tis done?

This phrase, with slight variations, by no means over-common elsewhere, is constantly occurring in Dekker, particularly with the adjective 'golden,' with which it appears again here in II, iii ('golden threds of happines') and IV, iii ('cutt her golden thred').

The following passage (which comes close upon a characteristically punning passage by the Clown) is quite in Dekker's style:

*Armante.* This is strange that I  
whoe haue so long been nip'd euen dead with could  
should now haue sunne beames warme mee. Oh Sir my wrongs.  
*King.* Come dreame not of them. I will fan them off  
as if they nere had been, for heere *Armante*  
I vow to morrow e're the god of daie  
has putt a golden ringe about bright noone  
thou shalt bee myne . . .

#### ACT II, SC. II

This contains another of Dekker's pet figures: the 'golden hook' metaphor familiar to readers of his plays. Though again by no means common elsewhere, it occurs (*inter alia*) in *Witch of Edmonton* and *Wonder of a Kingdome* among his later works. Further on in this scene we find another of his pet angling similes ('nibbling at a hook'); a punning reference to '*Aqua Coelestis*'; and the statement that the devil's master point lies in the codpiece (of 'a whoremaster'), which may be closely paralleled in *The Virgin Martyr* II, iii (1622) and *The Noble Soldier*. There are also several of those characteristically Dekkerian 'volleys' of words referred to above:

<sup>1</sup> See Pearson's *Dekker*, vol. II, pp. 228 and 230.

<sup>2</sup> [The MS. clearly reads 'muffe'.—W. W. G.]

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'*Revenge*; tis milke, tis honny, tis balme, delicate in the mouth, pretious in the hand, norishinge to the stomach, life to the soule, so shed is an elixar, so drunk a Iulip, it fattens, it battens, revenge, oh stay, stay, . . .'<sup>1</sup> The scene, mainly in prose, abounds in Dekkerian verbal addictions, including another 'nibbling fish' metaphor.

The mutilated line 707 'are not you one of the kings [q]ua[ ] pi[' addressed by Armante to a supposed pandar is of particular interest here. The editors devote a long footnote to this, conjecturing that the original reading was perhaps 'quaile pipers' and citing from the *O.E.D.* R. L'Estrange's phrase 'Quailpiping . . . to catch silly women'. This is most likely correct; but in any case it is worth notice that Dekker has several references to 'quail pipes' (used figuratively), twice certainly in the sense of a high-pitched voice (*Westward Hoe* V, iii, and *Wonderful Yeare* F3<sup>b</sup>), and once (somewhat differently) in *The Honest Whore* Pt. 2, I, ii, where Friscobaldo says, 'I love no mermaids, ile not be caught with a quail pipe.'

### ACT II, SC. III

There is another 'nibbling fish' metaphor here; and as in the previous scene various characteristic Dekkerian words.

### ACT III, SCs. I, II, AND III

Scenes i and ii, largely in prose, are also full of Dekker signs, the latter being devoted to the comic Irishman and Welshman.

Scene iii is in altogether different style and may be discussed later on.

### ACT IV, SCs. I AND II

These are again full of Dekker's mannerisms and tricks of style, from such lines as:

. . . theres in her eyes  
sunn beames of power to bringe to life agen  
a summer weare it dyinge

and 'thinck you the kinge would so him self dishonor'; to prose 'volleys' and puns of the Welshman and Irishman and clown. The latter's remark

when I see a horse that has done good to his cuntrie lye dead in a cart to bee carried to the doghowse, thinck I to my self theres the reward of service is quite in the vein of the most notable humanitarian of all the major Elizabethan dramatists, and the sentiment recalls his sneer in *If it be not Good* at the way in which 'noblemen use their great horses, when they are

<sup>1</sup> In these quotations I have not troubled to reproduce the exact orthography (abbreviations, obvious errors, etc.) of the Malone Society's edition, which would serve no useful purpose here, the play being easily accessible. Nor have I reproduced the punctuation (or rather lack of it) adopted in that edition on technical grounds.

past service: sell 'em to brewers and make 'em drey-horses' (Pearson's *Dekker*, vol. II, p. 307), and similar passages in his writings, not often found elsewhere in contemporary drama. Lines 1500-10 are devoted to an interesting piece of folk-lore—though the explanation given is unfortunately only treated as a joke—the question, namely, why 'wee English men when the Cuckoe is vppon entrance saie the Welsh Embassador is cominge'.

References to this interesting piece of folk-lore—the explanation of which is still uncertain—are very scanty in Elizabethan plays, but besides Middleton (who twice mentions 'the Welsh Ambassador' thus) Dekker, who is constantly referring to the cuckoo, also uses this title in *Match me*: 'The Welsh Embassador has a Message to you, Sir', i.e. 'you will be cuckolded'—as the context shows. Among other words, it may be noted that the opprobrious epithet 'Mumble-crust' occurs in at least three of Dekker's plays, and the expression 'coyt me out of doors' recalls 'coited off' in *The Sun's Darling*, III, i.

#### ACT IV, SC. III

This short scene in verse (with several rhymed couplets) contains many indications of Dekker's hand—among them being the very rare word 'murmuration' ('and not a leafe of murmeration stirs') which is used in the same sense in his pageant, *Britannia's Honor* (1628). For this word the *O.E.D.* gives no reference to any poet or dramatist, but only to a few obscure sermons etc.

Her braines are wilder then a trobled sea, noe clowd is so vnsettled; shees an engine driven by a thowsand wheelles, a German clock never goinge true reminds us of Dekker's frequent references to whirling brains and German clocks and their wheels (e.g. *A Strange Horse Race*), and recalls both 'A thousand wheels tosse my uncertaine feares', and 'there is a storm in my hot boyling brains' in *The Noble Soldier*, III, as well as

he carries

A soule within him framde of a thousand wheelles,  
Yet not one steddy

in *The Whore of Babylon*. 'Voyd' in line 1569 ('Tis voyd for certaine') is perhaps the scribe's error for 'voyc'd', which would at any rate make far better sense.

#### ACT V, SC. II

This is wholly prose, and devoted to the comic characters. The Clown who is ambitious to shine as a chronicler (perhaps, as the editors suggest, satirizing some well-known contemporary) is addressed by the pseudo-Welshman as 'master kernicler', a spelling which occurs also in *Northward*

*Hoe*, II, i, presumably by Dekker, where it is also used by a comic Welshman (there 'kernicles'). This is followed by three pages of puns and patter in the style that Dekker so easily and often pumped out, including one of his numerous references to 'Trojans' and 'Mad Greeks'.

## ACT V, SC. III

This, the final scene, is partly in prose and partly in verse, and is all entirely in Dekker's manner. It contains besides one of his typical inversions ('better spirritts mee guided') plenty of his typical words and phrases such as 'flea your skins of'; the almost inevitable Dekkerian figure of devils and reference to circles ('I plaid the honest coniurer when divills to be raisd I putt ang[els] into the same circles'); and the quite inevitable Dekkerian adjective 'lousy'. The uncommon word 'ptrooh' (presumably onomatopœic) occurs here in the still more uncommon expression, 'to cry pthrooh at' a person, exactly as it is found in *Satiromastix*, IV, iii.

The most interesting passage in this scene is no doubt the long satirical discussion of the new-fangled fashionable 'Batoon' (ll. 2161-88), for which word earliest reference in the *Oxford English Dictionary* is to *The Elder Brother* 1625 (Fletcher and Massinger). 'But now in [the raigne of this kinge heere in the] yeares 1621 : 22 & 23 such a wooden fashion will come vpp that hee whoe walkes not with a *Battoone* shalbee held noe gallant', says the Clown, adding, in response to a question, that '... this lyninge of Plimoth cloake (call'd the battoone) is a stuff but new cutt out of the loome'. The well-known 'Plymouth Cloak' is mentioned in Dekker's *The Honest Whore* Pt. 2, III, ii, and in his *Work for Armourers* (1609).

Many more characteristic passages and favourite words of Dekker could be quoted; but the above cursory list will probably suffice for any student of that writer who reads the play through.

As already stated, Act III, sc. iii, and Act V, sc. i, appear to me to show few signs of Dekker's hand, but some of Ford's earlier style, though Dekker perhaps had some hand in them.

They occupy pages 38-41 and 51-61 of the Malone Society's edition—in all considerably under one-fifth of the play—and are almost entirely in verse.

Act III, sc. iii is devoted to the meeting of the wronged lady and her supposed rival; Act V, sc. i mainly to the interview of the King with his young son, and his consequent conversion to goodness; and in both there is more than a touch of characteristic Fordian pathos and seriousness in the verse, which is also reminiscent of that writer in its cadence and idea. In many passages such as the following, the whole movement of the lines, with their frequent adjurations and Fordian repetitions, instantly dis-



tinguishes them from the work of the other writer concerned in the play:

*Carintha.* Ha, are you the wrong'd Armante?

*Armante.* And you the Queene

of the assendant now, loue hath resigned  
the glories of his raigne (his troath, his honour)  
to a fresh brid, whilst wee whoe are the scorne  
of his neglect and foyles of your vprisinge  
are hurld downe lower then the eyes of pitty  
can shed a teare for . . .

. . . oh as you are a woman  
the daughter of a mother, as you can  
pertake the sence of passion (greefes and pitty)  
the torments of contempt (disgrace and ruin)  
the miseries of honour (scorne and basenes)  
lett mee beseech you ere you tread the path  
(the path that must conduct you to the monument  
of a lost name) remember by whose fall  
you clyme to a kings bed . . .

*Carintha.* . . . but lett me dye  
in name, dye in my comforts, in the thoughts  
of all that honour virtue, if my plotts  
ayme farder then your peace, and to awake  
the kinge out of this dreame.

'Lady' [or 'Lord'] of the assendant' is a phrase several times used by Ford exactly as 'Queene of the assendant' occurs here; while 'the path that must conduct you to the monument of a lost name' is a characteristic hyperbole reminiscent of the closely contemporary 'direct path that leads to a virtuous name', in his austere tractate, *A Line of Life* (1620), among others. Indeed the whole passage with its adjurations, its insistence on truth and honour, Carintha's offer to dye in her *comforts*, is almost as typical of Ford as the Irishman's patter is of Dekker.

As for Act V, sc. i, it contains by far the most moving episode in the whole play, and almost the only one with any psychological handling. Though the Friar's message (in octosyllabics) referred to above may be by Dekker, Ford's sign-manual seems to me constantly apparent in the greater part of this lengthy scene, both in the verse of such lines as 'a hart to melt in penitence for *Penda*', and

I can restore  
all your *discomforts* in a rich discouery  
of honest duty, would you bee but pleasd  
to take truce with your greefes.

or

. . . oh my child

. . . thou art lost, for euer lost, to mee, the world,  
thie birth, thie freinds, thou hast not one freind left. . . .

(and many more such lines), and in the numerous peculiar special turns of

phrase and favourite Fordian words and contractions which it contains. Among these latter I may mention :

1. The occurrence of 'tee' (twice) and 'dee' (thrice) for 't'ye' and 'd'ye', which was a strongly marked habit of Ford's, as Professor W. Bang-Kaup first pointed out many years ago.<sup>1</sup> It must be remarked, however, that the contraction, though entirely absent in many contemporary playwrights and very rare in others (Dekker for instance only uses it once or twice, and then in its commonest connexion—'d'ee' for 'd'ye'), is yet frequent in some plays both of earlier and later date than *The Welsh Ambassador*. In none, however, is it of anything like so constant occurrence as with Ford.

2. 'deed la' (for 'indeed la'), sometimes used by Ford to indicate extreme simplicity in the speaker, and extremely rare outside his work. Apparently almost peculiar to Ford, 'deed la' occurs in his *Love's Sacrifice* and *The Fancies* and in two other plays in which his hand is suspected. But other examples are hard to find.

3. 'how shay by that'—a very peculiar spelling of this idiom, which can also be paralleled in Ford's plays.<sup>2</sup>

4. The constant use of 'a' for 'he', a form to which Ford was greatly addicted, though it is not found in the rest of the play.

5. The asseveration 'my sperrit scornes to fawne on slauery', which reminds us that this figurative use of 'to fawn on', though occurring sparsely in Shakespeare and others, is found at least eight times in the relatively small body of Ford's work. The only ejaculation in these scenes is 'Pish' (used once), but this again was a favourite one with Ford.

6. Lastly I may note the use here of 'all what' (for 'all that') in 'will you vndoe all what I strive to build?'—another minor Fordian addiction, occurring some ten times in his works, though far from common elsewhere in the drama.

As I believe that the general spirit and form—what Hebbel called the 'innere und äussere Form'—plus of course a careful study of the writer's special vocabularies, are the main factors in conjecturing the authorship of anonymous plays, I have made no attempt here to collect parallel passages from Dekker and Ford, save such few as chanced to occur to me; but I doubt not that in view of what has been said above, a careful reading of *The Welsh Ambassador* will convince any student of Dekker that that dramatist was mainly responsible for the play.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This 'ee' in contractions occurs, e.g., 31 times in *The Broken Heart* and 24 times in *Tis Pity*. Gifford and Dyce and most previous editors quite unwarrantably altered it to 'ye'.

<sup>2</sup> See *Review of English Studies*, vol. 2, Ap. 1926, p. 204: 'Two Notes on Elizabethan Orthography' by B. Lloyd.

<sup>3</sup> [Dr. Greg writes: 'No doubt *The Welsh Ambassador* is at least substantially Dekker's. In a list of his plays, compiled about 1678 by an antiquary called Abraham Hall, occurs the entry: "the Welch Embassador or a Comedy in disguises Tho Dekker"; and the attribution was supported by J. Q. Adams in his article on Hall's list in *The Library*, 1939, vol. xx, pp. 86-8. The conjecture had the approval of Henry Bradley'.—Ed., R.E.S.]

## 'THE DULL DUTY OF AN EDITOR'

BY JAMES R. SUTHERLAND

There was nothing accidental in the celebrated quarrel between Pope and Lewis Theobald, unless it is to be considered an accident that Pope ever got himself involved in the business of editing. Once he had stooped to textual truth and intermitted his song, the clash with Theobald was inevitable. The two men approached literature from different directions. They met, it is true, over the Works of Shakespeare; but they looked for, and found, different things there. Theobald (or so Pope believed) was that sort of reader who 'sees hairs and pores, examines bit by bit', whereas Pope himself was the apotheosis of the common reader. Over all Pope's editing there lingers the easy grace of the amateur; he was one of the 'gentlemen', and Theobald—with far more at stake—one of the 'players'. It is often assumed that Pope *knew* Theobald to be a better editor than himself, and that his satire of the man can safely be attributed to this knowledge, and to the annoyance it caused him. But this is perhaps to judge the issue from a modern standpoint: it is at least doubtful if Pope considered Theobald a good editor at all. These two editors interpreted their duty to Shakespeare very differently; they had not even begun to agree about what it was that an editor has to do. Theobald's views on editing were set forth clearly in the Preface to his edition of Shakespeare:

The Science of Criticism, as far as it affects an Editor, seems to be reduced to these three classes; the Emendation of corrupt Passages; the Explanation of obscure and difficult ones; and an Inquiry into the Beauties and Defects of Composition.

No doubt Theobald was listing those three editorial tasks in what he conceived to be their order of importance; for he went on to tell the reader that his own attention has been 'principally confin'd to the two former Parts', and that though he had offered some specimens of the third kind of criticism these were 'but occasional, and for the sake only of perfecting the two other Parts, which were the proper Objects of the Editor's Labour'. He added, with a sneer: 'The third lies open for every willing Undertaker; and I shall be pleas'd to see it the Employment of a masterly Pen': a sneer, because in the War of the Dunces the word 'undertaker' had been freely used by Pope's enemies in referring to his work as translator of Homer and editor of Shakespeare.

Opposite this, we may place a brilliant note of Pope's, written when he was only twenty-seven, and therefore dating from a time before he had become an editor himself:

It is something strange that of all the Commentators upon *Homer*, there is hardly one whose principal Design is to illustrate the Poetical Beauties of the Author. They are voluminous in explaining those Sciences which he made but subservient to his Poetry, and sparing only upon that Art which constitutes his Character. This has been occasion'd by the Ostentation of Men who had more Reading than Taste, and were fonder of shewing their Variety of Learning in all Kinds, than their single Understanding in Poetry. Hence it comes to pass that their Remarks are rather Philosophical, Historical, Geographical, Allegorical, or in short rather any thing than Critical and Poetical. Even the Grammarians, tho' their whole Business and Use be only to render the Words of an Author intelligible, are strangely touch'd with the Pride of doing something more than they ought. The grand Ambition of one sort of Scholars is to encrease the Number of *Various Lections*; which they have done to such a degree of obscure Diligence, that we now begin to value the first Editions of Books as more correct, because they have been least corrected. The prevailing Passion of others is to discover *New Meanings* in an Author, whom they will cause to appear mysterious purely for the Vanity of being thought to unravel him . . . For Reading is so much dearer to them than Sense, that they will discard it at any time to make way for a Criticism . . .<sup>1</sup>

Here already we have what was to be Pope's settled attitude towards the commentators upon dead poets; and if we allow for the fact that in his *Homer* Pope is not himself an editor, but a translator who has obliged his subscribers with a commentary on his author, we have a statement setting forth his views on editorial commentary. Commentators (he finds) persist in commenting upon everything except the poetry; they concentrate upon matters which are either irrelevant or of secondary importance; they have more learning than taste, and they make use of their reading to propose unnecessary corrections or to invent difficulties so that they may display their erudition.

So spins the silk-worm small its slender store,  
And labours till it clouds itself all o'er.

From this attitude Pope never departed. More and more firmly he held to the antithesis which he was to express in his *Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot* between the 'Theobalds with their 'pains, reading, study', and the Popes with their 'spirit, taste, and sense';<sup>2</sup> between the minute but short-sighted critic, and the enlightened reader who understands 'how parts relate to parts, or they to whole'.<sup>3</sup>

To all this we might apply the caution uttered by Scriblerus on another

<sup>1</sup> *The Iliad of Homer. Translated by Mr. Pope . . . 1715 (fol.), vol. i, p. 3.*

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, ll. 159-60. See D. Nichol Smith, *Shakespeare in the Eighteenth Century*, 1928, who adds (p. 47) that not till Johnson did any critic combine the two qualifications.

<sup>3</sup> *The Dunciad*, IV. 235.

occasion: 'Fair and softly, good poet!' For if we must have editors, then they must be expected to submit willingly to a good deal of that drudgery which Pope despised, or affected to despise; otherwise they are unlikely to perform their tasks adequately. When he consented to edit Shakespeare, Pope soon found himself facing problems of text and explanation which would not yield to even the finest 'spirit, taste, and sense', but which afterwards yielded on more than one occasion to Theobald's reading and study. For an editor of Shakespeare there was certainly ample scope to illustrate 'the poetical beauties of the author', but in his own edition Pope contented himself with drawing attention to what he called 'the most shining passages' by the use of commas in the margin, or, occasionally, of a star to distinguish a whole scene.<sup>1</sup> He had not, however, changed his mind about the importance of remarking upon an author's excellencies; that was, he still insisted,<sup>2</sup> 'the better half of criticism'.

What Pope thought about editors and editing—or what, at any rate, he was prepared to say about them—may be further pieced together from scattered passages in his poems and letters and from the Preface to his edition of Shakespeare. But for his liveliest and most complete criticism of contemporary scholarship we must turn to the *Dunciad*, and not merely to the poem itself but to the elaborate accretion of Prolegomena, Testimonies of Authors, Errata, Appendices, Indices, and Notes which he deliberately allowed to silt up round the poem. It may be questioned whether many readers to-day give more than a passing glance to the prose sections of the *Dunciad*; but they are all very much part of Pope's joke, and to ignore the critical apparatus is to miss a good part of his satirical intention.

When the *Dunciad* first appeared anonymously in May 1728, it was burdened with only a short preface ('The Publisher to the Reader'), and a few brief explanatory notes. About a month later, however, Pope was writing to Swift to say that the poem was going to be reprinted 'in all pomp . . . It will be attended with *Proeme*, *Prolegomena*, *Testimonia Scriptorum*, *Index Authorum* and *Notes Variorum*'. In short, it was to burlesque the more pompous aspects of contemporary scholarship. Swift was invited to contribute to the notes in the manner of 'dry raillery, upon the style and way of commenting of trivial critics', or by collecting 'the parallel passages of the ancients'.<sup>3</sup> What share Pope's friends had in compiling the notes to the *Dunciad* it is impossible now to determine; but though they may have contributed something, the greater part of the commentary was almost certainly the work of Pope himself.

The 'Advertisement' and 'A Letter to the Publisher' contain little to our

<sup>1</sup> See John Butt, 'Pope's Taste in Shakespeare', *Shakespeare Association Pamphlet*, 1935.

<sup>2</sup> In the Preface to his edition of Shakespeare.

<sup>3</sup> Pope to Swift, 28 June 1728.



purpose; the fun begins with 'Testimonies of Authors, Concerning our Poet and his Works'. Pope's main purpose in this section was to do for the general public what he was continually doing in those private letters which he afterwards made public—to set himself in as favourable a light as possible. While including attacks upon himself and his works, he more than counterbalanced any unfavourable impression those might create by inserting a large number of commendations from the most prominent men of letters of the day. But the 'Testimonies' had also a playful reference to the contemporary practice of prefacing the works of modern authors with a section of commendations by other literary men.

The section that follows, 'Martinus Scriblerus of the Poem', is a direct burlesque of the pedantic critic. While Pope is again serving a practical purpose here by giving a description of the scope and nature of his poem, he is also, by his references to Aristotle and Eustathius, and his solemn discussion of epic action, ridiculing the pedantic commentator.

It is in the notes, however, that he launches his main attack on modern editing—on verbal criticism in general, and on its modern exponent, Lewis Theobald,<sup>1</sup> in particular. Theobald, it should be remembered, was made King of the Dunces not because he was Pope's most persistent or most malicious enemy, but because in 1726 he had published his *Shakespeare Restored*—or, to give it its full title,

Shakespear restored: Or, A Specimen of the Many Errors, As well Committed, as Unamended, By Mr. Pope in his Late Edition of this Poet.

Whatever the merits of this work, there can be no doubt that it lived up to the second part of its title at least: Theobald may not have succeeded in demonstrating that he was himself the heaven-sent editor of Shakespeare, but he had shown that Pope certainly was not. Had Pope chosen to have it out with Theobald in prose, he could frequently have turned the tables on him, for Theobald's zeal often outran his editorial discretion. But Pope must have realized that on only too many occasions there was no sound answer to be made to Theobald's strictures, and that merely to defend his own editing would leave Theobald in possession of the field. The best policy here was to attack, and the best method of attack was ridicule—a ridicule so devastating that his critic would be hopelessly discredited. In this Pope very nearly succeeded. The editorial Humpty-Dumpty undoubtedly had a great fall; and it is only in modern times that he has been put together again.

In the poem, therefore, Pope is more concerned to render Theobald everlastingly ridiculous than to state his case against contemporary editors and editing. But he does state that case in his notes, where he proceeds to

<sup>1</sup> And Theobald's master, Richard Bentley. But Bentley figures more prominently in the *Dunciad* of 1743.

develop his own settled convictions about the sort of literary scholarship which Theobald represented, and which—for one reason or another, but chiefly because he had little taste for it, and was not good at it himself—he always resisted. The banter in Pope's prose commentary is often superb; but as note succeeds note it becomes clear that the banter is based on certain firm convictions which he held about the scholarship of his own day.

In the eyes of his contemporaries—and, indeed, in his own eyes—Theobald had established an undoubted claim to attention by being the first critic to apply Bentley's method of verbal criticism to the text of an English author. His *Shakespeare Restored* was, he claimed,

... the *first Essay of literal Criticism* upon any Author in the ENGLISH Tongue. The Alteration of a *Letter*, when it restores Sense to a corrupted Passage, in a *learned Language*, is an Atchievement that brings Honour to the *Critick* who advances it: And DR. BENTLEY will be remember'd to Posterity for his Performances of this Sort.<sup>1</sup>

It is not surprising that Pope should devote a good deal of space to examining or ridiculing the pretensions of verbal criticism. He pounces on this theme in the opening note to Book I, where, in a comment signed 'Theobald', he gravely discusses the correct spelling of *Dunciad*.

Ought it not rather to be spelled *Dunceiad*, as the Etymology evidently demands? Dunce with an *e*, therefore *Dunceiad* with an *e*. That accurate and punctual Man of Letters, the Restorer of *Shakespeare*, constantly observes the preservation of this very Letter *e*, in spelling the Name of his beloved Author, and not like his common careless Editors, with the omission of one, nay sometimes of two *ee's* ([as *Shak'spear*] which is utterly unpardonable . . .

This is followed by the remark of Theobald quoted above, that the alteration of a letter brings honour to the critic. By opening his commentary with a pedantic discussion which does nothing to illustrate 'the poetical beauties of the author', Pope is adroitly suggesting the irrelevance and triviality of so much verbal criticism. But this is only the first shot, and he recurs again and again to the same theme. Emendations in the text of the poem are gravely proposed by Scriblerus, and a whole section, 'Virgilius Restauratus', is devoted to satirizing Bentley's emendations in the text of Horace and other classical authors. Pope's cleverest retort to *Shakespeare Restored* comes in the long note to III. 274, where he inserts a series of emendations to *Double Falshood*. Theobald, it will be remembered, had offered this play to the public as the work of Shakespeare, and Pope jumped at the opportunity which this afforded of turning the tables on Theobald. ' . . . I am infinitely concern'd', Scriblerus is made to observe, ' . . . that so many Errors have escaped the learned Editor'; and he proceeds to supply a number of conjectural emendations, which, however ludicrous, have an air of plausibility, which generally involve no more than

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 193.

'the alteration of a letter', and which are presented in what is a fair parody of Theobald's style. Of a passage in Act I, Sc. i:

I have his letters of a modern date,  
Wherein by *Julio*, good *Camillo's* son  
(Who, as he says, shall follow hard upon,  
And whom I with the growing hour expect)  
He doth sollicit the return of gold, . . .

Scriblerus remarks:

This place is corrupted: the epithet *good* is a meer insignificant expletive, but the alteration of that single word restores a clear light to the whole context, thus,

I have his letters of a modern date,  
Wherein, by *July* (by *Camillo's* son,  
Who, as he *saieth*, shall follow hard upon,  
And whom I with the growing hours expect) . . .

Again, in Act IV, Sc. ii:

To oaths no more give credit,  
To tears, to vows; false *both*!

False Grammar I'm sure. *Both* can relate but to *two* things: And see! how easy a change sets it right!

To tears, to vows, false *troth*—

I could shew you that very word *troth* in *Shakespear* a hundred times . . .

Here Pope has hit Theobald's editorial manner perfectly. There is more wit hidden away among the *Dunciad* notes that is generally realized to-day.

The readiness of Theobald, in what Pope felt to be his rage for conjectural emendation, to set aside the readings of his text was not unnaturally a fruitful theme for the annotator of the *Dunciad*. By suggesting that Theobald had an overweening confidence in his own private judgment, Pope was, of course, indirectly defending his own failures to emend in his edition of Shakespeare. But here again, though the satire is certainly *ad hoc*, it also represents a reasoned conviction. In the opening note to Book II he makes a shrewd exposure of the dangers of conjectural emendation:

Two things there are, upon which all verbal Criticism is founded and supported: The first, that the Author could never fail to use the very best word, on every occasion: The second, that the Critick cannot chuse but know, which it is. This being granted, whenever any doth not fully content us, we take upon us to conclude, first that the author could never have us'd it, And secondly, that he must have used That very one which we conjecture in its stead.

Beside this sarcastic note one may set Pope's claim in the Preface to his Shakespeare to have 'discharged the dull duty of an editor . . . with a religious horror of all innovation,<sup>1</sup> and without any indulgence to my

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Pope's note to the *Iliad* quoted above, in which he claims that we are now beginning 'to value the first Editions of Books as more correct, because they have been least corrected'.

private sense or conjecture'. Pope did, in fact, make a large number of emendations, and some of those were made on the assumption that 'an author could never fail to use the best word on every occasion'—the best word being often no better than the word that Shakespeare might have used if he had been writing in 1720. On the other hand, he could fairly claim that he was not using his 'private sense or conjecture'; he was usually emending what seemed to him, owing to his lack of familiarity with Elizabethan English, a manifest printer's error, the sort of error that Lintott's compositor might have made in setting up *The Rape of the Lock*. By the standards of the early eighteenth century Pope was a conservative editor; and he probably resisted the temptation to astonish the world with a conjectural emendation far more often than did Theobald.

Yet if he was inclined as an editor to shun innovation, he was quite capable on a suitable occasion of laughing at a superstitious reverence of manuscript or textual authority in someone else. Thomas Hearne, the antiquary, is disposed of in a sarcastic note:<sup>1</sup> his fault is that he will not sufficiently use his editorial discretion, but everywhere displays a servile reverence for manuscript 'authority'. 'I shall follow the Manuscript', says Scriblerus, '. . . mov'd thereto by Authority, at all times with Criticks equal if not superior to Reason. In which method of proceeding, I can never enough praise my very good Friend, the exact Mr. *Tho. Hearne*; who, if any word occur which to him and all mankind is evidently wrong, yet keeps he it in the Text with due reverence, and only remarks in the Margin, *sic M.S.* In like manner we shall not amend this error in the Title itself [the spelling of *Dunceiad* as *Dunciad*], but only note it *obiter*, to evince to the learned world that it was not our fault, nor any effect of our own Ignorance or Inattention.'

No doubt Hearne deserved some at least of Pope's ridicule. Yet it is equally true that Pope was scarcely capable of doing justice to scholars like Hearne, or, for that matter, Theobald. And the reason for this, which is by no means wholly to his discredit, is also the main explanation of his deficiencies as a scholar: Pope was intensely, even passionately, interested in literature, he was not interested in what he would have considered mere reading. It was one of his complaints about Theobald that he dimmed his eyes and stuffed his head 'with all such reading as was never read'.<sup>2</sup> In so doing, Theobald was (to Pope) serving the goddess of Dullness; it may have been so, but he was also equipping himself to be an editor of Shakespeare. It was this sort of *specialized* reading that Pope could not bring himself to undertake. He might by the turn of events find himself editing Shakespeare for Jacob Tonson; but he was first and foremost a poet and a

<sup>1</sup> I. i.

<sup>2</sup> *The Dunciad*, I. 166. When Cibber became hero, in 1743, this line had to be removed to IV. 250.

man of wit, and he was not going to dim his own eyes by burrowing in antiquated and out-of-the-way books that Shakespeare might conceivably have read. His satirical account of the contents of Theobald's library<sup>1</sup> is enough to show his attitude to the miscellaneous and recondite reading of his contemporary. When he had been faced with the task of annotating his *Homer* he had viewed with dismay the prospect of reading through the long line of commentators. Again it was more than he could bring himself to do, and he had appealed to his friend Parnell:

The minute I lost you, Eustathius with nine hundred pages, and nine thousand contractions of the Greek character, arose to my view! Spondanus with all his auxiliaries, in number a thousand pages (value three shillings), and Dacier's three volumes, Barnes's two, Valterie's three, Cuperus, half in Greek, Leo Allatius, three parts in Greek, Scaliger, Macrobius, and (worse than them all) Aulus Gellius! All these rushed upon my soul at once, and whelmed me under a fit of the headache.<sup>2</sup>

When Parnell failed, he prevailed upon Broome to dredge in Eustathius for him, and extract anything that he thought of value. In returning thanks to Broome for those labours (24 March 1720) he remarked that while he himself had 'the flowery walks of imagination to expatiate in', Broome had 'drudged in only removing the loads, and clearing rubbish, heaped together by the negligence no less than by the industry of past pedants, whose very taste was generally so wrong, that they toiled most on what was least worth'.<sup>3</sup> We may note again Pope's emphasis on taste as opposed to mere learning.

It was also part of Pope's complaint about Theobald and others of his kind that they were more interested in their own reputation than that of their author. The author tended to be no more than a means for the editor to display his erudition.

There, dim in clouds, the poring Scholiasts mark,  
Wits, who like Owls see only in the dark.<sup>4</sup>

To that Pope added the following note:

These few lines exactly describe the right verbal Critick: He is to his Author as a Quack to his Patients, the more they suffer and complain, the better he is pleas'd; like the famous Doctor of that sort, who put up in his bills, *He delighted in matters of difficulty*.

Years later, when he wrote *The New Dunciad*, Pope returned to the same charge—this time against Bentley, who is made to remark:

For me, what Virgil, Pliny may deny,  
Manilius or Solinus shall supply:  
For Attic phrase in Plato let them seek,  
I poach in Suidas for unlicens'd Greek . . . 5

<sup>1</sup> *The Dunciad* (1729), I. 111 ff.; (1743—Cibber's library), I. 127 ff.

<sup>2</sup> *The Works of Pope*, ed. W. Elwin and W. J. Courthope, 1871-89, vol. vii, p. 451 ff.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. viii, p. 44.

<sup>4</sup> *The Dunciad* III. 187-8 (1729); III. 191-2 (1743).

<sup>5</sup> *The Dunciad* (1743), IV. 225 ff.



'Some critics', Pope explains, 'having had it in their choice to comment either on Virgil or Manilius, Pliny or Solinus, have chosen the worse author, the more freely to display their critical capacity.' And in an earlier note Scriblerus had remarked:

Herein shall we imitate the laudable Spirit of those, who have . . . delighted to comment on the Fragments of *dark* and *uncouth* Authors, preferred *Ennius* to *Virgil*, and chosen to turn the dark Lanthorn of *Lycophron*, rather than to trim the everlasting Lamp of *Homer*.<sup>1</sup>

To Pope and his fellow wits the scholar who devoted his time to the elucidation of some crabbed author of the past had lost all sense of proportion. He had lost sight of literary values altogether; he was not interested in what was good or bad, but only in what was obscure.

In the criticism of Theobald (who seems to have been in private life a modest enough man) there is undeniably a constant tendency to emphasis and self-advertisement; his commentary on Shakespeare was from the first coloured by his anxiety to draw attention to Pope's errors and omissions, and later by his pardonable desire to demonstrate his own competence. In consequence, he frequently showed a sad lack of self control, and only too often he allowed himself to run riot in parallel passages and irrelevant erudition. Several of Pope's notes in the *Dunciad* are successful parodies of Theobald's garrulous commentary in *Shakespeare Restored*; others are intended to expose his rather arrogant manner of insisting on the ignorance or carelessness of his predecessors. Few editors, on the other hand, have been less ostentatious than Pope, a creative writer condescending to criticism, but always sympathizing with his own kind.

Let it suffice, O Pallas! that every noble ancient, Greek or Roman, hath suffer'd the impertinent correction of every Dutch, German, and Switz Schoolmaster! . . . When these men have ceas'd to rail, let them not begin to do worse, to comment! let them not conjecture into nonsense, correct out of all correctness, and restore into obscurity and confusion. Miserable fate! which can befall only the sprightliest Wits that have written, and befall them only from such dull ones as could never write!<sup>2</sup>

The dull ones who could never write: among those Pope, of course, included Theobald. Somebody, he tell us (and the somebody is probably Pope himself) made the following epigram on Theobald's annotations of Shakespeare as they kept appearing in the public journals:

'Tis generous, Tibald! in thee and thy brothers,  
To help us thus to read the works of others:  
Never for this can just return be shown;  
For who will help us e'er to read thy own?<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *The Dunciad*, IV. 6 n.

<sup>2</sup> Added in 1735 at II. 179; (1743: II. 187).

<sup>3</sup> I. 164 (1729); I. 177 (1743).

Pope's attitude to the 'mere scholar' may be clarified if we recall the attitude of most cultured people of his generation to the virtuoso, the collector of moss, beetles, butterflies, and what not.

Yet by some object ev'ry brain is stirr'd;  
The dull may waken to a Humming-bird;  
The most recluse, discreetly open'd, find  
Congenial matter in the Cockle-kind;  
The mind, in Metaphysics at a loss,  
May wander in a wilderness of Moss . . .<sup>1</sup>

So the goddess of Dullness tells her votaries. Addison had been more explicit:

It is, methinks the Mark of a little Genius to be wholly conversant among Insects, Reptiles, Animalcules, and those trifling Rarities, that furnish out the Apartment of a Virtuoso.<sup>2</sup>

So, too, with the antiquarians, the collectors of statues and coins. They also suffered from a sort of monomania; their minds did not range philosophically, but were confined to a narrow and partial scrutiny of one small corner of human knowledge. Sir Isaac Newton, we are told, 'though he scarce ever spoke ill of any man, could hardly avoid showing his contempt for your virtuoso collectors and antiquarians. Speaking of Lord Pembroke once, he said, "let him have but a stone doll and he is satisfied. I can't imagine the utility of such studies: all their pursuits are below nature"'.<sup>3</sup> To Pope and his friends a Theobald, poring over his books and noting the different occasions on which Shakespeare used some obsolete word, was a sort of literary virtuoso 'conversant among Insects, Reptiles, and Animalcules'. He was not so much a reader as a collector.

Yet in this unnatural struggle between learning and taste Pope was to find more than once that learning might prove the stronger. That he was uneasily conscious of not having read sufficiently the books that Shakespeare probably knew may perhaps be deduced from the evident annoyance that one particular discovery of Theobald's caused him. In annotating a passage in *Troilus and Cressida*, V. v:

the dreadful Sagittary  
Appals our numbers . . .

Pope had referred his readers to Teucer, the archer in Homer. In a letter to Matthew Concanen, which appeared in *Mist's Journal*, 16 March 1728,<sup>4</sup> Theobald was able to show that 'this passage contains a piece of private history, which, perhaps, Mr. Pope never met with, unless he consulted the old Chronicle, containing the Three Destructions of Troy, printed by

<sup>1</sup> *The Dunciad* (1743), IV. 445 ff.

<sup>2</sup> *The Tatler*, No. 216.

<sup>3</sup> J. Spence, *Anecdotes* . . . , ed. S. W. Singer, 1820, p. 325.

<sup>4</sup> Reprinted by J. Nichols, *Literary Illustrations*, vol. ii, pp. 203 f.

Caxton in 1471, and Wynken de Werde in 1503; from which Book, as I shall hereafter shew, our Poet obtained this circumstance'. Theobald thereupon quotes a short passage about 'a mervayllouse beste that was called Sagittarye' which slew many of the Greeks with his bow. So much did Theobald's correction prey upon Pope's mind that after referring to it contemptuously in his note to I. 129, he returned to the same point at I. 162, and again at I. 166 and 212. Finally, as if that were not enough to ridicule Theobald's suggestion, he printed as an appendix, 'A copy of CAXTON's Preface to his Translation of Virgil', apparently relying on Caxton's antiquated English to move the reader to derisive laughter. But Theobald was right; it was indeed a notable victory for mere learning, and Pope would have done better to leave ill alone.

This ridicule of Theobald-cum-Caxton suggests another defect in Pope's editorial equipment. If Theobald and Hearne took perhaps a pedantic delight in mere antiquity, Pope had all the prejudice of the polite writer in favour of the up-to-date. He had the Augustan distaste for the uncouth, and a not entirely adult tendency to laugh at the homely language of his forefathers.<sup>1</sup> A scholar like Hearne, therefore, who shows an almost naive enjoyment of the antiquated, was easy game. He is honoured with three couplets<sup>2</sup> in the *Dunciad*:

But who is he, in closet close y-pent,  
Of sober face, with learned dust besrent? . . .

and Pope's notes on the passage are illuminating.

Most rightly are ancient words here imployed in speaking of such who greatly delight in the same: We may say not only rightly, but *wisely*, yea *excellently*, inasmuch as for the like practise the like praise is given to *Hopkins* and *Sternhold* by Mr. *Herne* himself . . .

And again, after quoting Hearne's praise of 'the old *English Saxon* tongue', Scriblerus remarks:

I do herein agree with Mr. *H. Little* is it of avail to object that such words are become *unintelligible*. Since they are *Truly English*, Men ought to understand them; and such as are for *Uniformity* should think all alterations in a Language, *strange*, *abominable*, and *unwarrantable*.

Those sarcastic notes are in accord with almost all Pope's pronouncements about the language of earlier days. In his celebrated *Guardian* essay (No. 40) he had laughed at Philips's use in his *Pastorals* of such antiquated terms as 'welladay' and 'whilome'. In 'The Art of Sinking', Ch. ix, he had ridiculed those writers whose imitation consists in 'copying the Blemishes, or Imperfections of celebrated Authors', and who, in imitating Milton,

<sup>1</sup> Cf. his letter to Humfrey Wanley, *Works*, ed. cit., vol. x, p. 115. Gay shared his enjoyment of this form of humour. See his 'Proeme to the Courteous Reader' in *The Shepherd's Week*.

<sup>2</sup> III. 181 ff. (1729); III. 185 ff. (1743).

reproduce with the utmost exactness such archaisms as 'nathless', 'paynim', 'emprize', and so on. In the Preface to his *Iliad* he had, it is true, ventured to assert—though with no great air of conviction—that 'perhaps the mixture of some . . . old words after the manner of Milton, if done without too much affectation, might not have an ill effect in a version of this particular work, which most of any other seems to require a venerable, antique cast'. But when he used antique words himself it was usually for comic effect, as in his burlesque imitations of Chaucer and Spenser.

This prejudice (the word is hardly too strong) against the language of former times was bound to interrupt Pope's enjoyment of Shakespeare; and he must often have longed to eliminate or to modernize some archaic turn of speech in his author. In this matter his friend and predecessor as an editor of Shakespeare was better fitted for his task. Nicholas Rowe was so far from deploring the archaic element in Shakespeare that after his own edition had been published he went so far as to write his own *Jane Shore* 'in imitation of Shakespeare's style'. Rowe, it is true, was careful not to go too far, but he went further than Pope approved. 'It was mighty simple in Rowe', he once remarked, 'to write a play now, professedly in Shakespeare's style, that is, professedly in the style of a bad age.'<sup>1</sup> Pope cannot be suspected of malice here; he liked Rowe, and Rowe had been dead for many years when the remark was made. The style of the Elizabethans was to Pope—as to most of his contemporaries—quite simply a bad style; we had advanced since Shakespeare's day.<sup>2</sup> As an editor, therefore, he must sometimes have been distressed by Shakespeare's obsolete or out-of-the-way expressions. That he did frequently modernize Shakespeare's English is only what we might have expected.

There is plenty of evidence, too, that Pope was also affected by a malady most incident to Shakespeare's editors—the desire to expunge from his page everything that he considered unworthy of his author. But here it should be remembered that he was exposed to far greater temptation than Theobald; he was the victim of his own excellent taste. Writing, after all, was Pope's business, and he had a constant itch to improve not only his own but other men's work, to bring a phrase to the final perfection of which it was capable. He had been doing this all his life, with Wycherley, with Parnell, with the Duke of Buckingham, with Broome and Fenton; the thing had become a habit. When he turned to the editing of Shakespeare, he approached his task, as Professor Nichol Smith has said, 'in the spirit of a literary executor'.<sup>3</sup> Here again the *Dunciad* throws some light on what

<sup>1</sup> J. Spence, *Anecdotes*, ed. cit., p. 174.

<sup>2</sup> See 'Shakespeare's Imitators in the Eighteenth Century', *Modern Language Review*, vol. xxviii, No. 1, Jan. 1933, pp. 24 ff.

<sup>3</sup> *Shakespeare in the Eighteenth Century*, 1928, p. 34. 'What has an executor to do with a series of papers that are not quite ready for the press? He is disloyal to the memory of his friend if he perpetuates the little blemishes which his friend would undoubtedly have

Pope really thought about an editor's obligations to reproduce faithfully and completely his author's text. In his address to the goddess of Dullness Theobald is allowed to boast:

Here studious I unlucky moderns save,  
Nor sleeps one error in its father's grave,  
Old puns restore, lost blunders nicely seek . . .<sup>1</sup>

To leave his meaning in no doubt, Pope adds a note:

As where he laboured to prove *Shakespear* guilty of terrible *Anacronisms*, or low *Conundrums*, which Time had cover'd . . .

The implication here seems to be that if an editor stumbles upon an anachronism or a low conundrum in his author he is to keep quiet about it for the sake of his author's reputation. *Amica veritas, sed magis amicus Plato*. If time has buried some wretched pun, why dig it up again? The editor's business is to display his author in the best possible light, and if his imperfections can be covered or removed or explained away, so much the better. It was this laudable desire to prevent Shakespeare from dishonouring himself that led Pope to relegate whole passages 'which are excessively bad'<sup>2</sup> to the foot of the page and print them in smaller type. And then Theobald, like some unlucky cur, had come nosing about among this garbage and dug it up again.

It has been customary to represent Pope as writhing in agony at the attacks of Theobald and others, and retaliating with malice and venom upon those who had giped at him or exposed his defects. That the publication of *Shakespeare Restored* must have annoyed him deeply is obvious enough; but an unprejudiced reading of the *Dunciad* will hardly bear out the contention that Theobald had goaded him to helpless rage. Indeed, Pope's satire on Theobald is far too telling and far too light-hearted to be the work of a man who has lost his temper. Theobald's thrusts had undoubtedly gone home, but they had not fallen on any part where a wound could be fatal. By his own standards Pope had certainly not scamped his work for Tonson; he had taken real pains with his edition of Shakespeare, and had discharged his duty, as he said himself, with more labour than he expected thanks. But editing, after all, was only a secondary matter with Pope. Looking back on what he may sometimes have thought to be wasted years, Pope could write:

Hibernian Politicks, O Swift, thy fate,  
And Pope's whole years to comment and translate.<sup>3</sup>

removed; and if he hits on a happy little alteration which he is convinced his friend would have at once adopted, a rearrangement of words, or the omission of a clumsy or obscure phrase, he may not be the trusty friend that he was expected to be if he stays his hand.

<sup>1</sup> I. 143 ff. (1729). In 1743 these lines had to be omitted, as having no reference to Cibber.

<sup>2</sup> The Preface to Pope's *Shakespeare*.

<sup>3</sup> These lines first appeared in 1736 at III. 327-8 (1743: III. 331-2); they were substituted for an earlier version of the couplet.



To this he added a note:

The Author here seems to lament that he was so long employed in translating and commenting. He began the Iliad in 1713 and finish'd it in 1719. The Edition of Shakespear, which he undertook merely because he thought no body else would, took up nearly two years more in the drudgery of comparing Impressions, rectifying the Scenary, &c. and the translation of half the Odyssey employ'd him from that time to 1725.

No doubt this is rather too off-hand; but Pope having none of Theobald's burning enthusiasm for emendation was not much tempted to show his paces as an editor. His real business was poetry. Editing, on the contrary, came first with Theobald; he was a second-rate writer, but he had high hopes of being remembered as a first-class scholar.

Writing of the effect on Pope of *Shakespeare Restored*, Johnson remarks:

From this time Pope became an enemy to editors, collators, commentators, and verbal critics, and hoped to persuade the world that he miscarried in this undertaking only by having a mind too great for such minute employment.<sup>1</sup>

I do not seek to set aside that judgment, but it has been my aim to suggest that it might with some advantage be modified. Pope's attitude to collators and commentators goes back to days long before Theobald had become a particular source of annoyance to him; it was indeed an attitude that he shared with the other wits of the day. He certainly retaliated upon Theobald, and with devastating effect; but he was also expressing the natural antipathy of the man of letters for the scholar. A natural antipathy, since the wits are seldom scholars, and the scholars are rarely wits. At best such a contest is like the encounter of the expert swordsman and the retiarius with his net and trident: one of them will win, but it is a pity they should ever be matched.

<sup>1</sup> *Lives of the Poets*, ed. G. B. Hill, III. pp. 138-9.

## THE SOCIAL STATUS OF JOURNALISTS AT THE BEGINNING OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

By A. ASPINALL

### I

All politicians in the eighteenth century believed that the freedom of the individual and the preservation of their unique Constitution mainly depended, first, on the right of public meeting, second, on the right to petition Parliament, and third, on the freedom of the Press. Sir William Blackstone said that a free Press was essential to the nature of a free State. 'Against venal Lords, Commons, or juries,' cried Sheridan, 'against despotism of any kind or in any shape—let me but array a free Press, and the liberties of England will stand unshaken.'

Even as late as the 1820s, however, journalism was regarded as neither a dignified nor a reputable profession, and Sir Walter Scott's statement that 'nothing but a thorough-going blackguard ought to attempt the daily Press unless it is some quiet, country diurnal' is characteristic of the attitude of the governing class at that time.<sup>1</sup> Henry Brougham, who was more closely connected with the Press than almost any other eminent politician of the time, described newspaper-writing<sup>2</sup> as 'dirty work, like most works of necessity, and one which nothing but the absolute impossibility of finding others who will do it, could ever reconcile me to'.<sup>3</sup> On 23 February 1810 George Farquharson, a journalist of Great Charlotte Street, sent to the House of Commons a petition complaining of a rule or bye-law made by the Benchers of Lincoln's Inn three years earlier, to the

<sup>1</sup> Sir Walter Scott's *Journal*, ii, 262 (1890) [3 April 1829]. J. G. Lockhart, Scott's son-in-law, who was himself determined to abstain altogether from 'partisan scribbling', said that Croker, the politician, had damned himself by his newspaper activities and connections. (*Ibid.*, ii, 262 n.) 'The newspaper or pamphleteer lines are not respectable', said Henry Cockburn in 1821. (Lord Cockburn, *Letters chiefly connected with Affairs of Scotland*, p. 16.) Charles Abbot, afterwards Speaker of the House of Commons, going to the Cockpit on 19 December 1798, the day before the opening of the parliamentary session, to hear the King's Speech read according to custom, found the room nearly full of strangers and 'blackguard news-writers' (*Diary and Correspondence of Charles Abbot, Lord Colchester*, i, 162).

<sup>2</sup> He called it 'stating a point or two for the Party'.

<sup>3</sup> R. H. M. Buddle Atkinson and G. A. Jackson, *Brougham and his Early Friends*, ii, 347. He added: 'Of course even this inducement would utterly fail were I not satisfied that the thing is kept religiously concealed. Lord Holland, the Lambs, Allen and the very few others who do such things, have precisely the same feeling upon it.' Thomas Grenville told his brother Lord Grenville, the Prime Minister, that his aversion to all editors was such that he had never had and never would have any communication with them (*Dropmore MSS.* [Hist. MSS. Comm. Report] ix, 401).

effect that no one who had written for hire in the newspapers should be entitled to be called to the Bar. As a result of the ensuing parliamentary discussion, the regulation, which seemed to be grounded on the assumption that no one connected with the newspaper Press was fit for the society of gentlemen, and which, in other times, would have excluded from a great profession men of the eminence of Addison, Steele, Swift, and Dr. Johnson, was rescinded.<sup>1</sup>

'It seems epidemic among Parliament men in general', said Coleridge, 'to affect to look down upon and to despise newspapers, to which they owe <sup>888</sup>/<sub>1000</sub> of their influence and character—and at least three-fifths of their knowledge and phraseology.'<sup>2</sup> Reviewing Croker's edition of Boswell's *Life of Johnson in the Edinburgh* in 1831, Macaulay, referring to a duel fought in January 1777 between George Robinson Stoney and Henry Bate, the notorious parson-editor of the *Morning Post*, declared, 'It certainly seems almost incredible to a person living in our time, that any human being should ever have stooped to fight with a writer in the *Morning Post*.'<sup>3</sup> Peel, when Irish Secretary, stigmatized Irish journalists as 'vile and degraded beings' who too often drove misguided people into the commission of crime.<sup>4</sup> When Walter Coulson was proposed as a member of the commission of inquiry into the Poor Law which preceded the Act of 1834, his having been the editor of the *Globe and Traveller* was stated as a ground for objecting to his appointment.<sup>5</sup> Writing to his friend Brougham, Lord Clarendon, alluding to a Mr. Knox of whom he had never previously heard, said that if he possessed qualities which fitted him to be a magistrate,

<sup>1</sup> *H. of C. Journals*, lxx, 121 (23 February 1810); *Cobbett's Parl. Deb.*, xvi, 38, 45 (23 and 26 March 1810). Windham declared in 1810 that he was not acquainted with any newspaper conductors (he must have forgotten that he had had Cobbett to dinner ten years before), but he understood them to be a set of men quite capable of corruptly misrepresenting the views of their opponents (*Parl. Deb.*, xv, 330 [6 February 1810]).

<sup>2</sup> *Letters of S. T. Coleridge*, ed. E. H. Coleridge, ii, 662 (8 May 1816).

<sup>3</sup> *Edinburgh Review*, liv, 4 (September 1831). In 1820, *Flindell's Western Luminary* branded Queen Caroline with criminality before the divorce proceedings against her in the House of Lords had even begun, whereupon Dr. Lushington, one of the Queen's Counsel, publicly referred to him as a 'reptile' greedily anxious for base lucre, who deserved to be consigned to the oblivion to which his demerits were certain to send him (*Parl. Deb.*, New Series, ii, 601 [25 July 1820]).

<sup>4</sup> *Parl. Deb.*, xxxiv, 36 (26 April 1816). William Gregory, the Permanent Under-Secretary in Ireland from 1812 to 1831, declared that the editor of the *Hibernian Journal*, a heavily subsidized ministerial newspaper, was 'the most impudent and most useless tributary scribbler that was ever employed' (*Brit. Mus. Addit. MSS.* 40195 [Peel Papers], fo. 232. Gregory to Peel, 16 March 1813).

<sup>5</sup> *Private Brougham MSS.*; Brougham's *Life and Times*, iii, 254. 'It would make the Press against the inquiry.' 'Althorp said it rather was an argument in his favour, he having raised himself to be a conveyancer.' When Lord Lyndhurst was Lord Chancellor he seriously offended some members of his Party by inviting Thomas Barnes to dinner. 'I suspect', commented Greville, 'that he is deficient in knowledge of the world and those nice calculations of public taste and opinion which are only to be acquired by intuitive sagacity exercised in the daily communion of social life.' (*Greville Memoirs*, 5 December 1834.)

he did not see why he should be disqualified for the office merely because he had been a reporter on the staff of *The Times*.<sup>1</sup> Wellington described Thomas Barnes, the famous editor of that newspaper, as 'an insolent, vulgar fellow'.<sup>2</sup> Even Le Marchant, Lord Chancellor Brougham's principal secretary (1830-34), who knew Barnes intimately, and who would never have thought of doing him an injustice, said that his morals had been very loose and that his sense of public virtue was not more exalted. 'The interest of his paper was all he looked to.'<sup>3</sup> 'I hate the whole tribe of news-writers', Wellington told Peel in 1827, 'and I prefer to suffer from their falsehoods to dirtying my fingers by communication with them. I may be wrong, but I have always acted upon this principle, and I have generally found that it succeeded at last.'<sup>4</sup> Sir William Knighton, George IV's Keeper of the Privy Purse and confidential adviser, declared that there could not exist a more despicable set of men than the 'scoundrels' connected with the daily Press. Newspapers, he said, were full of blasphemy and falsehood, and were written by 'wretches whose every principle is obnoxious to virtue'.<sup>5</sup> A writer in *Blackwood's Magazine* said in 1834: 'We recollect the time when our aristocratic exclusives sneered at the editor of, or contributor to, a Review, and would have thought it an insult to be asked to meet the editor of a newspaper.'<sup>6</sup>

Sir Walter Scott told Lockhart in 1829 that his connection with any newspaper, even as editor, would be 'disgrace and degradation': to be the conductor of a newspaper was a situation which no gentleman could possibly accept.<sup>7</sup> Four years earlier, Lockhart had declined the editorship of the *Representative*, a daily paper which John Murray and the youthful Disraeli were proposing to establish in London. Sir Walter thought that though newspaper journalism ought to be made a more respectable branch of literature, Lockhart ought not to lose caste in society by working to that end.

I . . . should think it rash for any young man, of whatever talent, to sacrifice, nominally at least, a considerable portion of his respectability in society in hopes

<sup>1</sup> *Private Brougham MSS.* Lord Clarendon to Lord Brougham, 7 October 1860. The date of this letter is noteworthy.

<sup>2</sup> A. Aspinall, *Corresp. of Charles Arbuthnot*, p. 81.

<sup>3</sup> *Le Marchant's MS. Journal*.

<sup>4</sup> C. S. Parker, *Sir Robert Peel*, i, 484. (Corrected from the MS. [*Brit. Mus. Addit. MSS.* 40306 (Peel Papers), fo. 246].) Wellington once referred to 'Croker and the scribbling set', a phrase which would have mortified the *Quarterly* reviewer if he could have seen the letter (C. S. Parker, *Life and Letters of Sir James Graham*, i, 419). The Duke said in 1833 that he had never had and never would have any dealings with the newspapers, and he spoke contemptuously of journalists as 'these gentry' (E. Herries, *Life of J. C. Herries*, ii, 164-65).

<sup>5</sup> A. Aspinall, *Letters of George IV*, iii, 481; Lady Knighton, *Memoirs of Sir William Knighton*, i, 126-27.

<sup>6</sup> *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* ('The Influence of the Press'), xxxvi, 381 (September 1834).

<sup>7</sup> Sir Herbert Grierson, *Letters of Sir W. Scott*, xi, 162. 'I would rather sell gin to the poor people and poison them that way.'

of being submitted as an exception to a rule which is at present pretty general. This might open the door to love of money, but it would effectually shut it against ambition.<sup>1</sup>

Lockhart's friend William Wright gave him similar advice:

I should not receive an offer of the editorship of a newspaper as a compliment to my feelings as a barrister and a gentleman, however complimentary it might be as to my talents. In short, I enter entirely into your feelings on this head, and we think alike, for, whatever our friend Disraeli may say or flourish on this subject, your accepting of the editorship of a newspaper would be *infra dig.* and a losing of caste.<sup>2</sup>

Disraeli tried hard to persuade Lockhart to co-operate: his situation, he prophesied, would ultimately be as important as any in the Empire; he was not to be vulgarly styled editor, he was to be 'Director-General of an immense organ, and at the head of a band of high-bred gentlemen and important interests'.<sup>3</sup> This assurance went far to remove Lockhart's doubts, and the promise of a salary of £1,500 a year for 'hints and advice' and occasional articles was a highly attractive inducement. The fact that Lockhart did in the end accept shows that the prejudice against paid newspaper work was beginning to break down.<sup>4</sup> But even in 1835 Roebuck could say that a newspaper editor, 'in our aristocratic country', was not deemed a gentleman, and that if any person were generally and avowedly known to be the editor of a paper, he would lose caste if he had been previously considered to be a gentleman.<sup>5</sup> And the *London Review* declared<sup>6</sup>:

That those who are regularly connected with the Newspaper Press are for the most part excluded from what is, in the widest extension of the term, called good society; or that, if admitted into good company, they are very rarely admitted on a footing of equality, is a lamentable truth familiar to everybody who has any knowledge of the world. . . . That a class of men, of which many possess the acquirements and entertain the feelings which the most liberal education can give, and who collectively wield so vast a power over the public mind, should be placed in a social position so irritating to generous dispositions, so utterly disproportioned to their political importance, excluded from the enjoyments of polished society, and removed equally out of the reach of its softening influences, and of responsibility to its good opinion, appears to us a national misfortune. . . . Men of birth, refinement and sensitive pride will not enter into an occupation which lowers their social position, and if any such engage in it, the illicit connexion is carefully kept secret. The Newspaper Press is thus degraded from the rank of a liberal profession: the employment, and the class engaged in it, sink; and the conduct of our journals falls too much into the hands of men of obscure

<sup>1</sup> S. Smiles, *Memoir and Corresp. of John Murray*, ii, 197.

<sup>2</sup> Andrew Lang, *Life and Letters of J. G. Lockhart*, i, 367.

<sup>3</sup> W. F. Monypenny and G. E. Buckle, *Life of Disraeli*, i, 69. [1929].

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, i, 72; Andrew Lang, *Life and Letters of J. G. Lockhart*, i, 372.

<sup>5</sup> J. A. Roebuck, *The Stamped Press* of London, p. 3.

<sup>6</sup> Quoted by J. A. Roebuck in his pamphlet, *The London Review and the Periodical Press*, pp. 5-6. See *Parl. Deb.*, 3rd Series, xxviii, 784 (15 June 1835) for Roebuck's trenchant condemnation of anonymous journalism.



birth, imperfect education, blunt feelings and coarse manners, who are accustomed to a low position in society, and are contented to be excluded from a circle in which they have never been used to move. The exceptions to these statements, in favour of the merits of individuals, are very many; for we believe that, of the writers in our newspapers, a large part are actuated by higher feelings, and free from the vices incidental to their occupation. Some, but far fewer exceptions, are to be made in favour of individuals whose honour, consistency, information, ability and taste have been so evident and so generally acknowledged as to keep them free from being confounded in the common aversion to their profession. But, unhappily, neither class is sufficiently numerous to give a tone to the whole body or to raise its character; and, as the influence of the newspaper seems to have been most abused in those instances in which it has been greatest, the worst position in society has generally been occupied by those who had the greatest political power.

It was recognized that the editorship of a periodical like the *Quarterly Review* was quite a different matter from the editorship of a newspaper. It was a post coveted, said John Murray, by many of the highest literary characters in the country. It gave its possessor the entrée into the highest social circles, and Lockhart did not hesitate to close with such an offer, at a salary of £1,000 a year, in the autumn of 1825.<sup>1</sup> Periodicals like the *Quarterly* and the *Edinburgh* were taken in by the educated classes: they were not to be seen in the homes of the common people.

## II

The reasons for the inferior social status of journalists are not hard to seek. In an age when the country was still for the most part governed by the aristocracy and its connections, it was natural that men who wrote for the people and sought to bring the pressure of public opinion to bear on Parliament and the Government by appealing to the opinions and prejudices of the people, should be looked upon with suspicion and even hostility.

Because of the disrepute into which journalism had fallen since the days of Addison and Steele, it was unusual for newspaper men to have good family connections, or even to be men of integrity, and scrupulous in their methods of business. Leigh Hunt described Badini, the editor of the *Morning Post* for some time in the 1780s, as in appearance 'the epitome of squalid authorship. He was wretchedly dressed and dirty; and the rain, as he took his hat off, came away from it as from a spout.' Whenever he made any money, 'he disappeared, and was understood to spend it in ale-houses'.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> W. F. Monypenny and G. E. Buckle, *Life of Disraeli*, i, 72; S. Smiles, *Memoir and Corresp. of John Murray*, ii, 199.

<sup>2</sup> Leigh Hunt's *Autobiography*, p. 137 [1885]. Cobbett referred to Badini in his *Political Register*, 13 November 1802: 'The *Weekly Messenger*, published by Bell in the Strand, is the only English paper which is suffered to circulate in France. There is an office for the

William Jackson, who succeeded the 'fighting parson' as editor of the *Morning Post*, became in later years a sort of French spy. He would have been hanged as a traitor in 1795 had he not committed suicide in court.<sup>1</sup> In February 1796 the proprietors of the *Morning Post* forged a copy of a French newspaper, *L'Eclair*, which purported to contain the terms of an armistice and the preliminaries of peace between the Emperor Francis II and the French Republic; and they conspired to send it to the *Telegraph* with the idea of discrediting it as the channel of early intelligence. The proprietors of the *Telegraph* brought an action against the *Morning Post*, and, five months later, the Court of King's Bench awarded the plaintiffs £100 damages. Lord Kenyon, the Lord Chief Justice, expressed the opinion that a criminal prosecution would lie against the persons connected with the forgery.<sup>2</sup>

It was described as a 'peculiar feature' in Perry's character that, as editor of the *Morning Chronicle*, he always held as most sacred the correspondence of those contributors who changed their politics, making no attempt subsequently to use it against them.<sup>3</sup> Very different was the conduct of William Stewart, the principal proprietor of the *Courier*, who, when the Whigs came into office in November 1830, handed over to them his correspondence with the late Government, and offered Grey as obsequious a support as he had given Wellington. Le Marchant, Brougham's principal secretary, whose task it was to manage some of the ministerial papers during the next four years, declared: 'It taught us how to deal with him. Of course, I took care to leave him no specimens of my correspondence.'<sup>4</sup>

In 1825 a copy of one of Canning's despatches found its way into the continental Press in a garbled form. Dr. Stoddart, of the *New Times*, successfully applied to the Foreign Secretary for a copy of the original text, in order, as he said, 'to correct the one by the other'. 'I thought the indulgence harmless, and no more than his fidelity deserved', wrote Canning. 'But I am cured of this sort of liberality', he added, when he saw to what

sale of it, open at Paris by express permission of the Government. This paper is conducted by an Italian named Badini, who has lately boasted that Bonaparte is about to bestow a reward on him.'

<sup>1</sup> *Annual Register*, 1795. Appendix to Chronicle, pp. 145-7.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 1796. Chronicle, p. 41; Lord Colchester, *Diary and Correspondence*, i, 31 (for Stock Exchange repercussions). The *Telegraph* was started on 30 December 1794, but was soon bought up by Daniel Stuart (S. Morison, *The English Newspaper*, 1622-1932, p. 198).

<sup>3</sup> *John Bull*, 16 December 1821 (quoting an obituary notice of Perry in the *Morning Chronicle*, 10 December 1821).

<sup>4</sup> *Le Marchant's MS. Journal*. John Galt (*Autobiography*, ii, 196) confirms that William Stewart was the principal proprietor in 1830. Writing to his father, Lord Lonsdale, on 4 December 1830, Lord Lowther said that the proprietor of the *Courier* had behaved worse than 'any of the others, in using communications against the late Ministry, which they had made to him, when in office'. (*Private Lonsdale MSS.*) This confirms Le Marchant.

use the editor had put the official document. 'The rogue begins by announcing that he has an authentic copy, &c &c, and in effect tells the world that he has got it from my Office. This is scoundrelly, if it had been harmless, but it is mischievous into the bargain. . . . The publication is annoying in a high degree, and would be grievously offensive if it were intentional.'<sup>1</sup>

Newspaper men were all too prone quite unashamedly to change sides in politics for the sake of pecuniary advantage. David Tobin, the editor of an Irish Opposition newspaper, said that he managed it without regard 'either to the persons, the religious or the Party prejudices' with which the paper was identified; and in 1818 he offered to edit a Government newspaper.<sup>2</sup> Brougham said that the reason why his friend Lord Althorp had such a low opinion of the newspapers and of all those connected with them was that they were 'persons of no faith, and whose opinions, if they ever had any, were merely framed to suit their readers'. 'Yet', he added, 'his calmness of judgement and constant sense of justice [and of public duty] made him waive any objection arising from this prejudice, if prejudice it be.'<sup>3</sup> Croker classed most newspaper editors in 1829 as 'needy adventurers'.<sup>4</sup>

The *London Review* underlined these points in an admirable passage. After commenting on the ill-treatment of journalists by society, the writer went on: <sup>5</sup>

How can men help shunning contact with men who have the power of inflicting secret injury, and who are known to be in the habit of using that power against the members of Society; who, to gratify the rage of Parties or the odious envy of the vulgar, expose to ridicule the follies and even the misfortunes of individuals, and who, under the shelter of anonymous writing, evade all responsibility to injured personal honour, or the outraged opinion of the world? Society treats the gentlemen of the Press much as folks used to behave to witches. It dreads their secret malice and irresistible power, and pays them off for great injuries by petty spite and contemptuous exclusion. . . . How is it possible to respect men who display so frequent a disregard for morality or moral approbation; who, with the power of directing public opinion, are so rarely above a vile subserviency to the prejudices and passions of their readers; and who, dependent on the will of persons having no higher object in view than the success of a pecuniary speculation, so often change their opinions in order to keep the favour or increase the dividends of their employers? How can society respect men who show so little respect for themselves and for each other; who, when their gains are threatened, can talk, it is true, in a lofty tone about the high character of the

<sup>1</sup> E. J. Stapleton, *Official Corresp. of Canning*, i, 328-29.

<sup>2</sup> *Brit. Mus. Addit. MSS.* 40275 (Peel Papers), fo. 316. To Peel, 8 April 1818.

<sup>3</sup> The words in brackets are in the MS. only (*Private Althorp MSS.*).

<sup>4</sup> Lord Brougham's *Life and Times*, iii, 254.

<sup>5</sup> L. J. Jennings, *Croker Papers*, ii, 23.

<sup>6</sup> Quoted by J. A. Roebuck in his pamphlet, *The London Review and the Periodical Press*, pp. 5-6 (1835).

Press of their country for talent and integrity, but who, in general, are occupied in bandying with each other the lowest slang of the pothouses, or imputations of gross dishonesty and dense ignorance? Society treats the writers in newspapers as its fears prompt, and as their conduct and their own estimate of themselves in some degree justify.

Roebuck was strongly of the opinion that the evil would disappear if, as in France, newspaper writing ceased to be anonymous. Irresponsible journalism meant dishonest and immoral journalism. He said: <sup>1</sup>

The writers in the newspapers are amenable to no opinion; they are morally and legally irresponsible. Wielding the sort of power they do, no one who at all regards his peace and security would admit them to familiarity or confidence, for they would betray both, and remain unpunished in spite of their gross immorality. With men in such a position, society could pursue but one of two courses—it could either condemn all anonymous writing, and thus subject the writers of the Periodical Press, like the rest of mankind, to the dominion of public opinion, or it could drive them utterly beyond the bounds of civilised society. Society, unfortunately, has chosen the least efficient and most mischievous of the two courses open to it. They have made outcasts of these writers, in place of compelling them to yield obedience to the received morality of the day.

Although the Press was often described as 'the palladium of the British Constitution', its licentiousness was considered by politicians of all shades as appalling. *John Bull* and the *Age* on the Tory side were matched by weekly prints such as *Sherwin's Political Register* and the *Gorgon* on the Radical side. Sherwin once declared that unless the people taught their tyrants that bayonets were not made for tyrants alone, but for the people, there would be an end of the last remaining hope of liberty.<sup>2</sup> On another occasion he applauded the assassination of Perceval, the Prime Minister, the result of 'the bountiful interposition of Providence, by the assistance of John Bellingham'.<sup>3</sup> Alluding to trials for forgery, he commented on 'the murders about to be committed in the Old Bailey', and referred to one of the Judges as 'the knave on the bench'.<sup>4</sup> Applying the doctrine of *Killing no Murder* to the Liverpool Ministry, the writer said: 'When they began their system of tyranny by suspending the Habeas Corpus Act, the proper way would have been to have put them to death.' Taxes, said another, were unjust, and any man who imposed them or collected them, might justly be put to death.<sup>5</sup>

A staunch friend of the freedom of the Press like Brougham described

<sup>1</sup> J. A. Roebuck in his pamphlet, *The London Review and the Periodical Press*, pp. 6-7. See, too, *Parl. Deb.*, 3rd Series, xxviii, 784 (his speech on 15 June 1835). Even his own friends thought his condemnation of the Press much too sweeping. He asserted that the Press was guilty of 'the most paltry corruption, the basest cowardice and the blackest immorality' (*Ibid.*, c. 785).

<sup>2</sup> *Parl. Deb.*, xli, 1504 (22 December 1819). Quoted by Brougham.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, xli, 1505. See *Sherwin's Political Register*, 28 June 1817.

<sup>4</sup> *Parl. Deb.*, xli, 1506. See *Sherwin's Political Register*, 26 September 1818.

<sup>5</sup> Quoted in *Parl. Deb.*, xli, 1506 (22 December 1819). See *Sherwin's Political Register*, 24 October and 14 November 1818.

some of the Radical newspapers and pamphlets of the period 1815-30 as 'containing blasphemy in very great abundance, obscenity in considerable store, every species of ribaldry, personal, political and irreligious—those worthless men entering into a sort of profligate competition, bidding on the one hand under each other, and all of them under the respectable prints in point of price, and over one another in the malignity and ferocity of their writings'.<sup>1</sup> An extraordinary squib published during the Liverpool election campaign of 1812 attacked Brougham, one of the Whig candidates, as given to unnatural practices. He told Grey: <sup>2</sup>

The utmost industry has failed in discovery with author, printer or circulator, but it came from some of the underlings of *Canning's* friends. I never saw a man so *astounded* as Canning was when I told him of it, and I believe he would have given half his votes and more to have got rid of it—indeed, they all were greatly annoyed by it. You may guess *how much* this annoyed *some* of them, but I expressly forbade all retaliation, on a pledge being given to help in finding out the authors and circulators.

The Duke of Richmond described newspapers in 1789 as 'those vile instruments of scandal' which had been treating Queen Charlotte 'with a degree of grossness, shocking to every man possessed of the least feeling of delicacy'. The licentiousness of the Press, he added, had recently increased 'to such a degree of profligacy that it was evident they must be encouraged and supported in their calumnies, or they never would dare to go the length they did every day'.<sup>3</sup> Echoing the Duke's condemnation of the newspapers, Lord Loughborough declared that they were full of 'violent abuse, dark and malignant insinuation, and foul calumny and aspersion'; his explanation of this vulgarity was, partly that people whose reputations were attacked, too often declined to appeal to the Courts for redress, partly that the public had a 'gross and vulgar appetite . . . for scandal'.<sup>4</sup> He himself had never 'contaminated his hands with any connection with a newspaper'.<sup>5</sup>

At the end of the eighteenth century, pamphlets were considered almost the only medium for reputable political discussion.<sup>6</sup> Defending James Perry, who was brought to the bar of the House of Lords on a charge of breach of privilege in 1798, Lord Derby said that among newspapers the *Morning Chronicle* was 'distinguished by its regard to the decencies of private life, by its disdain of all scandal on individuals and those licentious personalities by which the peace of families was disturbed'.<sup>7</sup> Until the

<sup>1</sup> *Engl. Hist. Review*, xii, 717 (October 1897).

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, lix, 102 (January 1944).

<sup>3</sup> *Parl. Hist.*, xxvii, 1092 (23 January 1789).

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, c. 1093.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>6</sup> Lord Campbell, *Lives of the Lord Chancellors*, viii, 214 [1868]. Thirty years later Croker said that no one read pamphlets, but that, of course, was an exaggeration.

<sup>7</sup> *Parl. Hist.*, xxxiii, 1312 (22 March 1798). Lord Lansdowne (better known as Lord Shelburne) said that he had always read the paper with satisfaction. Lord Sydney, however, described it as a 'scandalous' paper, which he would not allow to come into his house (*Ibid.*). Lord Derby supported the Opposition; Lord Sydney the Government.



early years of the nineteenth century, newspapers derived a regular income from suppression and contradiction fees, a practice no less reprehensible than the blackmailing activities of ladies such as Mrs. Bellamy and Harriette Wilson. A person would be informed that, unless he paid hush-money, a paragraph reflecting on his moral character would be published in an early number of the paper. If no reply was received, a cutting of the paragraph might then be sent him, with a suggestion that if he cared to pay the 'contradiction' fee, a statement from him on the subject of the paragraph would be printed. So the profit which unscrupulous newspaper proprietors derived from the scandal not published, may have been as large as that which they drew from scandal which was published. It was chiefly because the first John Walter was notoriously addicted to such detestable practices and made himself rich by them that his reputation was so bad. Crabb Robinson believed him to be as 'dishonest and worthless' a man as he had ever known, '—among those at least who had preserved appearances'. William Combe, the Treasury writer, went so far as to say that Walter never did an honest act in his life. He 'became rich by the vilest arts'.<sup>1</sup> Cobbett explained the failure of his short-lived newspaper, the *Porcupine*, which expired in 1801, in this way: <sup>2</sup>

It was not, I found, an affair of talent but of trick. I could not sell paragraphs. I could not throw out hints against a man's or woman's reputation in order to bring the party forward to pay me for silence. I could do none of those mean and infamous things by which the daily Press, for the far greater part, was supported, and which enabled the proprietors to ride in chariots, while their underlings were actually vending lies by the line and inch.<sup>3</sup>

A Tory Scottish gentleman, when asked in 1820 to patronise the *Clydesdale Journal*, is said to have replied: 'It has been greatly injured by the

<sup>1</sup> Crabb Robinson's *MS. Diary*, 16 November 1812. The Attorney-General, Sir John Scott, expressed the opinion in 1798 that this vicious practice of private slander and blackmail had increased enormously during the previous thirty years (*Parl. Register*, I, 577 [4 April 1798]). It was not confined to the English Press. General Luttrell said in the Irish House of Commons in 1784 that it had been 'lately imported' into Ireland from London. He hoped that the Act of that year to secure the liberty of the Press by enforcing the compulsory registration of newspaper proprietors and printers, would put an end to the publication of slanderous libels in the Irish Press (*Irish Parl. Register*, III, 167-68 [12 April 1784]).

<sup>2</sup> Cobbett's *Pol. Register*, 4 January 1817.

<sup>3</sup> The following paragraphs which appeared in the *Morning Post* in 1789, are typical illustrations. The first clearly refers to the Duke of Queensberry.

'Strayed from his stall in Piccadilly, THE PARISH BULL, commonly called Q. in the corner. He was seen to take the Dover road, and is supposed to have gone in pursuit of a favourite cow. It is a little old beast with only one eye, and a thin grey curl on each side of his head. He has been seen roaring about the streets for some time past. Whoever will bring him to the Wine Vault in Piccadilly shall be properly rewarded. N.B. He has a star on his left flank' (9 February).

'The Duke of Queensberry's sudden retreat from the gayer circles has occasioned various speculations. Some imagine that he has buried himself in his study, to contemplate on political subjects . . . Others knowing his juvenile powers and gallant propensities think that he has retired with some tender female to indulge in the delights of love and sentiment' (10 February).

personalities it has directed against the people in opposition. These can do it no good, and have greatly injured it in the eyes of respectable persons. If the paper is continued, I trust that all such personalities will be avoided in future.'<sup>1</sup> Another similarly conducted paper, the *Glasgow Sentinel*, published a slanderous accusation which led to the famous duel on 26 March 1822 in which James Stuart fatally wounded Sir Alexander Boswell, the eldest son of Dr. Johnson's biographer. 'To ransack family history', commented *The Times*, 'to slander the private character of those who are opposed to us on political grounds, are acts which but too frequently bring murder in their train.'<sup>2</sup>

The editor and proprietors of *John Bull* lied brazenly when they were brought to the bar of the House of Commons in 1821 for an alleged breach of privilege. Henry Fox Cooper, 'a mean, dirty, prevaricating wretch', declared that he was the sole editor, and the others made equally untrue statements about the distribution of the profits and the general management of the paper.<sup>3</sup> Henry Grey Bennet said that such a paper could receive its support only 'from persons of the basest, vilest and most infamous nature'. 'They could be none but the basest and lowest of their species.'<sup>4</sup> Ministers themselves, in their private correspondence, were critical and disapproving. Wellesley-Pole, for example, declared that the paper was 'very blackguard' as well as very clever, and 'in some of its attacks unwarrantable'.<sup>5</sup> Staunch Tories like Sir Thomas Lethbridge condemned its malignity as wholeheartedly as did the Whigs whose wives were accused of immorality. *The Times* correctly described *John Bull* as differing from all other similar publications in that it was established for the express purpose of libelling private character.<sup>6</sup> Alderman Waithman, a former Sheriff of London, and a linen-draper by occupation, was called a receiver of stolen goods. Lady Caroline Wrottesley, the daughter of the Earl of Tankerville, was accused of committing adultery with a menial servant.

In April 1827, John Joseph Stockdale, the publisher of Harriette Wilson's blackmailing *Memoirs*, offered the Duke of Wellington secret information relating to the break-up of the Liverpool Ministry a few days earlier, but, he added, 'My services are only to be obtained for remuneration, commensurate with their importance'.<sup>7</sup> Sir James Scarlett, the Attorney-General, declared in 1830 that the *Morning Journal*, the organ

<sup>1</sup> *Parl. Deb.*, N.S., vii, 1329 (25 June 1822).

<sup>2</sup> *The Times*, 15 June 1822.

<sup>3</sup> *Parl. Deb.*, N.S., v, 633-43 (10 May 1821); v, 656-76 (11 May 1821).

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, v, 643.

<sup>5</sup> *Private Bagot MSS.* Wellesley-Pole to Sir Charles Bagot, 11 February 1821. He added, 'The sale of it is quite unprecedented, and to be sure it does roast the Opposition handsomely'.

<sup>6</sup> *The Times*, 22 April 1822.

<sup>7</sup> *Private Wellington MSS.* To Wellington, 19 April 1827.

of the ultra-Tory faction, was conducted on the principle of 'perpetual slander, falsehood and misrepresentation'. Every member of the Wellington Administration was being labelled 'with a degree of virulence and atrocious falsehood to which no private man would submit'. The paper was 'vilifying all character, public and private, and defying all authority'.<sup>1</sup> William IV often had reason to complain of newspaper misrepresentation, and said that the Press was 'the vehicle of everything that is false and capricious'.<sup>2</sup>

On the whole, newspaper writers were assessed at their proper value, as they were a century earlier when Addison was rewarded with an Under-Secretaryship of State for his famous pamphlet in verse, *The Campaign*, and when Swift, who was given a deanery for his support of the Government, refused to regard himself as a hireling, and indignantly rejected Harley's offer of a £50 note.

### III

It is, however, necessary to remember that the great journalists of the early eighteenth century were pamphleteers rather than newspaper editors; that such well-known weekly periodicals as the *Examiner* and the *Spectator* were essentially pamphlets, and that newspaper journalists were held in no very great esteem.<sup>3</sup> At the end of the century the social position as well as the moral character of a few exceptional men in the newspaper world would bear comparison with that of the most eminent journalists in Queen Anne's reign, and by their influence the character of the profession was to be transformed. Perry, the editor and proprietor of the *Morning Chronicle*, lived on terms of close personal friendship with the Whig aristocrats. His vanity, said Hazlitt, made him fond of the society of Lords. 'His shining countenance reflected the honour done him, and the alacrity of his address prevented any sense of awkwardness or inequality of pretensions.'<sup>4</sup> In 1798 Lord Derby said he was proud to have the honour of Perry's acquaintance, and the Duke of Bedford too testified from personal knowledge to the excellence of his character and the soundness of his political principles.<sup>5</sup> Perry was in a position to invite a member of the royal family to dinner: he may have owed his intimate acquaintance with the

<sup>1</sup> *Parl. Deb.*, N.S., xxii, 1211, 1214 (2 March 1830).

<sup>2</sup> Brougham's *Life and Times*, iii, 181. Grey to Brougham, 20 April 1832. Sir Samuel Romilly's remarks on the state of the Press are worth noting. 'It was the common language of all Ministers to represent the Press as peculiarly licentious in their time. If of late it had been more licentious than before, that was only a proof of its wonderful buoyancy, for it had grown under greater restraints in respect to publishers and printers than had ever been formerly known' (*Parl. Deb.*, xix, 606 [28 March 1811]).

<sup>3</sup> L. Hanson, *Government and the Press 1695-1763*, p. 92.

<sup>4</sup> *Edin. Review*, xxxviii, 362 (May 1823).

<sup>5</sup> *The Parliamentary Register*, I, 351-52; *Parl. Hist.*, xxxiii, 1311-12 (22 March 1798).

Duke of Sussex to his Masonic connections.<sup>1</sup> Returning to England from the United States in the summer of 1800, Cobbett, who had delighted the Tories by his able and vigorous writings in defence of England and English institutions, was warmly welcomed by leading members of the Government. Windham invited him to dinner on 7 August, and there he met such celebrities as Canning, Hookham Frere, George Ellis and the Prime Minister himself. Cobbett said: 'I regarded this [dinner] as a great act of condescension on the part of Mr. Windham, and more especially on the part of Mr. Pitt, of whose talents and integrity I had the highest possible opinion.'<sup>2</sup> Subsequently Cobbett dined with George Hammond, the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, meeting Canning, Sir William Scott and Lord Hawkesbury, afterwards Lord Liverpool, the Prime Minister.<sup>3</sup>

P. W. Harvey, the editor of the *Freeman's Journal* for some years after 1802, said in 1812 that he had personally known the Prince Regent for more than sixteen years.<sup>4</sup> In his *Reminiscences*, Charles Knight described how Mrs. Lane, whose husband edited the newspaper, the *British Press*, held a sort of levée every morning in her drawing-room, which was attended by authors, actors, artists and members of Parliament, from whom she picked up the gossip of the town.<sup>5</sup> William Jerdan, the editor of the *Sun* from 1813 to 1817, relates in his *Autobiography* how he dined with Lord Eldon, Lord Castlereagh, and other Cabinet Ministers in Horace Twiss's 'dark little dining-room' in Serle Street, Lincoln's Inn.<sup>6</sup> John Taylor, the proprietor of the *Sun*, said in 1819 that he had known Lord Eldon, the Lord Chancellor, for more than thirty years, and that the Earl of Coventry was his 'particular friend'.<sup>7</sup> Another journalist, Joseph Gillon, was well known to the Duke of Buccleugh, who recommended him to the notice of the Home Secretary in 1817.<sup>8</sup> Eneas McDonnell, the editor of a defunct Irish newspaper, the *Morning Chronicle*, and one of the leading

<sup>1</sup> Thomas Moore's *Journal and Correspondence*, ii, 229-30; Lord Londonderry, *Castlereagh Correspondence*, ix, 232.

<sup>2</sup> L. Melville's *Cobbett*, i, 121; W. Windham's *Diary*, p. 430. Lord Bathurst was of the opinion that Cobbett's subsequent change of politics was to be attributed to two circumstances. First, that Pitt had taken no notice of him beyond that which was required by common civility. Second, he had later quarrelled with Windham, who, when coming into office in 1806, had declined to appoint him Under-Secretary of State for War and the Colonies! But, as John Quincey Adams remarked, there were other causes of Cobbett's conversion to Radicalism. (J. Q. Adams, *Memoirs*, iii, 496. See W. Windham's *Diary*, p. 460, [28 February 1806] for his last interview with Cobbett.) It is interesting to note that Windham afterwards said that he did not know any newspaper editors. (*Parl. Deb.*, xv, 330 [6 February 1810].)

<sup>3</sup> L. Melville's *Cobbett*, i, 121; *Cobbett's Pol. Register*, 4 January 1817.

<sup>4</sup> A. Aspinall, *Letters of George IV*, i, 37.

<sup>5</sup> Charles Knight, *Passages of a Working Life*, i, 111.

<sup>6</sup> William Jerdan's *Autobiography*, ii, 287.

<sup>7</sup> *Brit. Mus. Addit. MSS.* 38279 (Liverpool Papers), fo. 190. Taylor to Lord Liverpool, 31 August 1819.

<sup>8</sup> *Private Sidmouth MSS.* Duke of Buccleugh to Lord Sidmouth, 27 August 1817.

members of O'Connell's Catholic Association, had the honour of dining with Lord Wellesley, the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, in 1822.<sup>1</sup> Almost daily, Theodore Hook, the founder of *John Bull*, could be seen in the fashionable salons and boudoirs of Mayfair; and the Prince Regent was his patron. Thomas George Street, the editor of the *Courier*, dispensed a most lavish hospitality, entertaining the most distinguished characters of all ranks and professions.<sup>2</sup> At the beginning of December 1834 Thomas Barnes dined with Lord Lyndhurst, who, incidentally, married the daughter of the journalist Lewis Goldsmith.<sup>3</sup>

Writing from the Northern Circuit early in March 1823 to Lord Duncannon, the Chief Opposition Whip, Brougham described it as a time of crisis for the Party and for Europe. He had asked Barnes to call either at Brooks's Club or at Duncannon's house, to discuss with some of the leading members of the Opposition the line which should be taken on the great questions of the day. Brougham thought that Barnes would prefer to go to Brooks's, and, in his letter to Duncannon, added: 'Pray be very particular in directing the waiters to *show him with much civility into the small room*, as he is somewhat particular. . . . He is a man who *requires civility*.'<sup>4</sup> Writing in the early 1830s, Le Marchant said that Barnes seemed to regard all public men with equal indifference, 'or, as Creevey once told me, he is a thorough misanthropist, and at war with all the human race except Brougham, whom he loves as warmly as he detests everybody else'.<sup>5</sup> Whenever he invited the great man to dinner, Le Marchant always took care to have people of distinction to meet him. 'Once', said Le Marchant, 'I dined at his house, where I was a little surprised at finding Rogers, the poet, and Edward Ellice. We fared sumptuously on venison, turtle, and the richest wines, but some of the company were not of the first water.'<sup>6</sup> Very interesting is Le Marchant's account of a dinner to which he was invited in 1833:<sup>7</sup>

On Saturday I dined with Barnes at his house in Nelson Square. Our party consisted of Rogers, Hobhouse, Ellice, William Brougham, Bellenden Ker, Dr. Elliotson, Mr. Alsager and Mr. Sterling, or, as Rogers called them, 'the City article and the leading article'; and one or two other people whom I did not know, besides Mrs. Barnes<sup>8</sup> and Miss Barnes. We had turtle and venison,

<sup>1</sup> Brit. Mus. Addit. MSS. 40334 (Peel Papers), fo. 79. Gregory to Peel, 13 December 1823; W. J. Fitzpatrick, *Corresp. of O'Connell*, i, 358; Wm. Fagan, *Life and Times of O'Connell*, i, 224. Fagan said that McDonnell had edited the *Cork Mercantile Chronicle*.

<sup>2</sup> William Jerdan's *Autobiography*, i, 92.

<sup>3</sup> *Greville Memoirs*, 5 December 1834.

<sup>4</sup> *Private Bessborough MSS.* Brougham to Lord Duncannon, Ferrybridge, Sunday night (2 March 1823; postmark, 4th).

<sup>5</sup> *Le Marchant's MS. Journal*.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>8</sup> She was Mrs. Barnes only by courtesy. Greville was not introduced to Barnes until 1838. On 11 August he wrote: 'Yesterday I met Mr. Barnes at dinner for the purpose of being introduced to him: an agreeable man enough, with evidently a vast deal of information, but his conversation bears no marks of that extraordinary vigour and pungency for which the articles in *The Times* are so distinguished.' (*Greville Memoirs*.)



champagne, Burgundy and Hermitage, but our host was embarrassed by his company. Our hostess was vulgarly personified. Writing as these men do with spirit and taste, feeling as they do, and more than they ought, their ascendancy in society, still, they cannot associate with gentlemen without showing signs of conscious inferiority. When Barnes lays down his pen he becomes a child.

Le Marchant gives us one more picture of Barnes in society <sup>1</sup>:

We had a large dinner to-day. Abercromby, Lord Duncannon, Hobhouse, John Carter, Robert Gordon, Edward Stanley of Cheshire, Waddington the traveller, and last though not least either in dimensions or importance, Barnes of *The Times*; the party in fact was made for him. It went off very pleasantly, our guests being much amused by the mild and unobtrusive manners of the great journalist. He is a political Fréron only with his pen. He is an old friend and correspondent of Hobhouse, but the latter was evidently not desirous of publishing the intimacy, and it was only towards the close of the evening when warmed by wine and conversation that Hobhouse's reserve wore off. Abercromby was highly entertained with Barnes, and desired me to ask them both together again. Ellice abused me for allowing Barnes to meet so decided an opponent of the Administration as Abercromby, but I assured him that Abercromby had said nothing that could prejudice the Government with Barnes.

Gibbons Merle, who was connected with the *Courier* whilst the Whigs were in power, boasted of his descent from Shakespeare on his mother's side, and of his being heir to a title on his father's. This, he said, 'qualified me . . . to hold the rank of a gentleman'.<sup>2</sup>

#### IV

Speaking at the Anniversary Meeting of the Newspaper Printers' Benevolent Society in July 1839, Lyndhurst said that 'it had become the duty of every man sensible of the power of this engine [the Newspaper Press] to do his utmost for the purpose of adding to the respectability of those who directed it, who ought to be sought rather than avoided as associates, and treated with the courtesy and respect to which their character and attainments entitled them'.<sup>3</sup> Every member of the Cabinet knew Peter Borthwick, the editor of the *Morning Post*, in 1852.<sup>4</sup>

There is other evidence that, as the nineteenth century advanced, journalism was tending, in the view even of prejudiced politicians, to become more respectable. Of the twenty-three persons who in 1810 were employed in reporting parliamentary debates for the newspapers, no less than eighteen were men with a University education.<sup>5</sup> Sir James Mackin-

<sup>1</sup> *Le Marchant's MS. Journal*, (1833).

<sup>2</sup> *Private Brougham MSS.* To Brougham, 21 March 1835.

<sup>3</sup> *Quarterly Review*, lxx, 468 (1839-40).

<sup>4</sup> R. Lucas, *Lord Glenesh and the Morning Post*, p. 118.

<sup>5</sup> *Parl. Deb.*, xvi, 30<sup>00</sup> (23 March 1810). Methuen said of the reporters in the House of Commons, on 29 July 1833: 'He had good reason to believe that they were gentlemen of education and integrity; many of them had been brought up to the Bar, and there were many and proud instances of individuals of the body having risen to high and well-

tosh said in 1819 (before, however, the appearance of *John Bull*) that he never recollected a period in which the columns of the newspapers 'exhibited more general decorum, more general ability, more exemplary abstinence from attacks upon private life, and from those disgraceful invasions of the privacy of domestic character which were once so much indulged in'. 'This great and valuable improvement in the public Press', he added, 'had arisen from the superior talents, judgement and character of the proprietors, and the improved advantages and better condition, in every respect, of the gentlemen employed under them.'<sup>1</sup> The *Edinburgh Review* remarked in 1816 that many years had elapsed since newspapers had been conducted upon the avowed plan of purveying slander for the 'prurient appetite of the vulgar'.<sup>2</sup>

Croker hoped in 1829 that the time was not far distant when newspapers would be edited, as in France, by peers, Privy Councillors and members of Parliament. 'We shall see men of high hopes and attainments conducting journals, and obtaining, at last, through their literary character, seats in the House of Commons.' 'All this is coming', he said confidently.<sup>3</sup> James Silk Buckingham, whom the Government employed in 1831 to superintend three friendly newspapers, and who founded the *Athenaeum*, entered Parliament for the newly-enfranchised town of Sheffield two years later, and John Walter, the second proprietor of *The Times*, sat in the First Reformed Parliament for Berkshire. Melbourne, the Prime Minister, said in 1836 that no one could then think it disgraceful or derogatory to be connected with the Press.<sup>4</sup> Brougham said that there never was a more respectable person in any profession than Coulson, the editor of the *Globe and Traveller*:<sup>5</sup>

His freedom from all bias of a personal kind is shown in this, that though originally a pupil of Bentham, and living for many years in his house, he is wholly free from the prejudices of that sect, and only has [*sic*] profited by the many good qualities of their founder.

deserved honours.' (*Parl. Deb.*, 3rd Series, xx, 69.) Peel said that there were then 40 or 50 parliamentary reporters, 'some of them holding commissions in the Army and Navy, several at the Bar, most of them having received an academical education, and occupying, therefore, the situation of gentlemen' (*Ibid.*, c. 86).

<sup>1</sup> *Parl. Deb.*, xl, 1176 (15 June 1819). See also xli, 1540 (Sir James Mackintosh's remarks, 23 December 1819).

<sup>2</sup> *Edin. Review*, xxvii, 124 (September 1816).

<sup>3</sup> *Croker Papers*, ii, 23. *The Times*, under the régime of Thomas Barnes, did not approve of the idea that men connected with the Press should seek parliamentary honours—at any rate during the struggle for the Reform Bill, when, it was suggested, men of a different stamp should offer themselves as candidates. Hearing that William Jerdan, of the *Literary Gazette*, and formerly editor of the *Courier*, had been proposed for Weymouth, *The Times* declared: 'We say decidedly that such a gentleman has no political claims, at such a crisis on the British public.' 'There are plenty men of wealth and property to be found to undertake a contest.' (*The Times*, 29 April 1831; William Jerdan's *Autobiography*, iv, 355.)

<sup>4</sup> *Parl. Deb.*, 3rd Series, xxxv, 986 (8 August 1836).

<sup>5</sup> *Private Brougham MSS.* Draft Autobiography.

Whilst John Black conducted the *Morning Chronicle*, its sale seriously declined. Le Marchant said of him:<sup>1</sup>

The only service he rendered to his employers was to preserve the consistency of his paper, for he was a man of exemplary probity and far above the influence of pecuniary considerations. His was the only unblemished character in the circle to which he belonged.

Writing in the 1840s, Lord Campbell, in his *Lives of the Lord Chancellors*, said that whereas half a century earlier newspapers had been in the lowest state of degradation, they were now conducted by men of education and honour, and no one would deem it any imputation on his character to be supposed to have contributed to them.<sup>2</sup> Campbell himself, at the age of nineteen, had accepted an invitation to write for Peter Stuart's Tory newspaper, the *Oracle*, but though he contributed only literary reviews, he severed his connection with that journal within a month, declaring that 'the office of historian' (he had just agreed to write for the *Annual Register*) was 'more noble than that of the newspaper critic and translator'.<sup>3</sup> He said that it was by his honour, political consistency and gentlemanly manners more than by his abilities that Perry had conferred great credit on the Newspaper Press.<sup>4</sup> It was not the least of Garrick's achievements that he succeeded in withdrawing actors from their old statutory classification among rogues and vagabonds, and that he made the highest circles of London society seek the company of a player as an honour. Such men as Perry, Barnes, Leigh Hunt, Albany Fonblanque, and Disraeli rendered an equally great service to newspaper journalism in redeeming the men connected with it from the charges of licentiousness, dishonesty, lack of principle, and vulgarity.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Le Marchant's MS. Journal*.

<sup>2</sup> Lord Campbell, *Lives of the Lord Chancellors*, viii, 214.

<sup>3</sup> Mrs. Hardcastle, *Life of Lord Campbell*, i, 40 [1881].

<sup>4</sup> Mrs. Hardcastle, *Life of Lord Campbell*, i, 45. See *Parl. Deb.*, xli, 1540 (23 December 1819) for Mackintosh's public tribute to Perry as a great journalist.

<sup>5</sup> It is my pleasant duty to repeat the thanks I have expressed on previous occasions to the owners of private manuscript collections for permission so generously given to use the letters in their possession: the Duke of Wellington, the Earl of Beasborough, Viscount Sidmouth, Earl Spencer, Mr. Robin Bagot, Mr. C. K. Ogden and the Orthological Institute (for the Brougham MSS.), and Mr. H. C. Le Marchant.

## NOTES AND OBSERVATIONS

### MEPHISTOPHILIS AND THE LOST 'DRAGON'

In 'Mephistophilis and the Lost "Dragon"',<sup>1</sup> on the basis of textual evidence in the 1616 Quarto of *Doctor Faustus*, I broached the theory that on the Elizabethan stage Mephistophilis, after having been invoked by Faustus in I, iii, rose from the floor in the shape of a dragon. (In other words, an inanimate stage property rose through a trap-door.) Faustus then called out:

I charge thee to return and change thy shape,  
Thou art too ugly to attend on me:  
Goe and returne an old Franciscan Frier . . .

And Mephistophilis did. There is some interesting confirmation of this theory in two later Elizabethan plays. Marlowe was an innovator who was diligently imitated; and it would be surprising, rather than not, if the spectacular effect I have described above were not copied.

Act IV, scene ii of *Bussy D'Ambois* is a pretty obvious imitation of the conjuration scene in *Doctor Faustus*. (This has already been noted by Professor Parrott in *The Tragedies of George Chapman*: 'the invocation of the Devil, couched in the manner of Marlowe'.) At D'Ambois' request, the Friar is about to raise a spirit. In words that receive their point if we recall Marlowe, Tamyra cries:

Good father, raise him in some beauteous forme,  
That with least terror I may brooke his sight.

At the end of his invocation (much like Faustus's) the Friar commands, '*Appare in forma spiritali, lucente [.] splendida & amabili*'. The stage-direction for the appearance of Behemoth and his cohorts is '*Ascendit*'; and when they leave, it is '*Descendit cum suis*'. Thus in Chapman's imitation of *Doctor Faustus* are stressed the elements of my hypothesis for *Doctor Faustus*: the use of a trapdoor for the ascent and descent of the spirit, and the possible horrid appearance of the invoked spirit. It is almost as though Tamyra were remembering a contemporary performance of Marlowe's play!

But definite evidence that one of the *dramatis personæ* could appear in the guise of a dragon on the Elizabethan stage is to be found in I, i of

<sup>1</sup> See *R.E.S.*, vol. xviii, 1942, pp. 312-5.

<sup>2</sup> London and New York, 1910, p. 544.

Thomas Heywood's *The Brazen Age*. Before his fight with Hercules, Achelous thus describes himself:

Not *Proteus* can trans-shape himselfe like vs,  
For we command our figure when we please.

Then we come to the following stage-direction: '*Alarme. Achelous is beaten in and immediatly enters in the shape of a Dragon.*' That 'enters' here means 'rises from the trap' (cf. 'enters' for 'discovered as the curtain before the inner stage is drawn') is indicated by the second of the ensuing stage-directions: '*Alarme. He beats away the dragon. Enter a Fury all fire-workes.*' '*When the Fury sinks, a Bulls head appeares.*' '*He tugs with the Bull, and pluckes off one of his horns. Enter from the same place Achelous with his forehead all bloody.*' These directions reveal the ingenuity of the Elizabethan stage in providing transformations which could rise from the stage floor. But we are particularly interested in the appearance of Achelous as a dragon from the trap and then descending—for that is exactly the way I think Mephistophilis first appeared and left the stage.

There are two other plays which appear to reflect Mephistophilis' initial entrance. At the beginning of Barnabe Barnes' *The Devil's Charter* (1607), there is a dumb show in which a Monk conjures before Roderigo Borgia sitting on a chair in 'midst of the stage'. First appears 'a diuill in most ugly shape', 'from which Roderigo turneth his face'. This devil 'being coniured downe', 'ascends another diuill', whom also 'Roderigo disliketh'. 'Hee descendeth', after which two devils of acceptable guise 'ascend' and later 'descend'. Ophioneus, a devil, enters in II, i of Chapman's *Cæsar and Pompey* (1631): 'Thunder, and the Gulfe opens, flames issuing; and Ophioneus ascending, with the face, wings, and taile of a Dragon; a skin coate all speckled on the throat'.

The discussion of traps on Shakespeare's stage in J. C. Adams's *The Globe Playhouse, Its Design and Equipment*<sup>1</sup> supersedes past information and speculation on the subject. I owe my use of *The Brazen Age* to Adams's discussion of platform traps (pp. 113-23)—but we differ in our interpretation of Achelous's dragon entrance. One of Adams's conclusions is of very great interest (p. 121): 'Whenever creatures associated with the lower world—as devils, furies, ghosts, and so on "enter" to the accompaniment of "thunder and lightning", "loud musick", or the like, the presumption is that they rise through a trap.'

The suggestion for his spectacular effect Marlowe got from the *English Faust Book*—which he must have absorbed rather completely, for a single passage in the play often points to many scattered passages in the source. In the latter's Chapter 2, Mephistophilis, on his first appearance is a flame of lightning, then a globe, then a fiery man, finally a grey friar. But the

<sup>1</sup> Harvard University Press, 1942.



particular source of the transformation from dragon to friar appears to be in Chapter 19. Faustus has asked Lucifer whether Mephistophilis can change his appearance: '. . . wherevpon came a fierce Dragon, flying and spitting fire around about the house, and comming toward LUCIFER, made reuerence, and then changed himself to the forme of a Frier, saying, Faustus what wilt thou?'

LEO KIRSCHBAUM.

### MILTON'S LAST SONNET

Milton's final sonnet, 'Methought I saw my late espoused saint', is undated. For well over two hundred years it has been assumed that the subject of this poem is his second wife, Katherine Woodcock, whom he married on 12 November 1656, and who died on 3 February 1658. The conjecture seems to have begun in 1725 with what Dr. Johnson called the 'honey-suckle life' of Milton by Elijah Fenton, which states positively that the sonnet 'does honour to her memory'. Similar flat statements, without evidence or explanation, were made in rapid succession by other early writers,<sup>1</sup> who seem not to have realized that Fenton's conjecture was only a conjecture. On the other hand, the first biographers—Aubrey, Wood, Phillips, Toland, and the Anonymous Biographer—make no such statement and are, indeed, remarkably uninformative about Milton's second marriage. Jonathan Richardson, writing as late as 1734, ignores Fenton's statement and declares of Katherine Woodcock: 'We know nothing of her behaviour.'

It would seem time that Fenton's guess be reconsidered, especially since none of these early writers, including Fenton, knew anything about either Katherine Woodcock or the date of her marriage to the poet. (Most of them suppose that it took place two or three years after he became totally blind.) Fenton, moreover, has no claim to be taken seriously as an authority; in fact, most modern critics, ironically enough, have been contemptuous of his biographical sketch. To argue that Katherine Woodcock was Milton's 'best beloved' wife is no argument at all, for *apart from this sonnet* we have no evidence whatsoever of the poet's attitude toward her. Richardson's statement—that 'we know nothing of her behaviour'—is still quite true; and it would be absurd to reason in a circle. The usual biographical comments on her sweetness and goodness, and Milton's deep affection for her, are all inferences from the sonnet, which may not be about her in the first place.

There is, of course, only one other person who could possibly be the subject of this poem. For so many years now we have been inter-

<sup>1</sup> For example, Thomas Birch's *Life* (1738, p. xxxi), Francis Peck's *New Memoirs* (1740, p. 100), Bishop Newton's *Life* (1749, p. xxvi), and so on.

preting Mary Powell's character unsympathetically, and assuming (on little or no evidence) that Milton's married life after 1645 was unhappy, that our habits of mind rebel at considering her as the subject of this moving and poignant sonnet. But consider her we must. Few of us would have the temerity to deny that Milton loved her at the time of their marriage. The early biographers, although interpreting the later reconciliation as a great proof of Milton's generosity, are nevertheless unanimous in calling it 'an Act of Oblivion, and a firm League of Peace for the future'. These are Edward Phillips's words, and in 1645 he was living in Milton's house. The Anonymous Biographer states that husband and wife lived together 'in good accord till her death'. Toland calls it 'a perfect reconciliation', and Richardson, the sympathetic artist, thinks that the poet was probably moved by 'his unextinguished former love'. None of the early biographers suggest in any way that Milton and his first wife were unhappy after 1645. This idea is born later, and assumes the air of incontrovertible fact when stated by Masson and subsequent writers. Really incontrovertible is the fact that Mary presented her husband with four children, one of whom, their only son, died. Also beyond dispute is the fact that Mary died in May of 1652, three days after giving birth to a daughter and shortly after Milton became totally blind.

It seems that we must look to the sonnet itself for evidence of its subject, but let us first remark that if it is about Mary, it belongs in time to the period of the preceding sonnets; if about Katherine, it becomes an isolated example of its author's sonneteering, composed at least two or three years later.

The poem is clearly about a deceased wife of Milton whom, in a dream, he imagines he sees. She has been buried, for she is brought to him, as Hercules brought Alcestis in the tragedy of Euripides, back from the grave:

Methought I saw my late espoused saint  
Brought to me like Alcestis from the grave,  
Whom Jove's great son to her glad husband gave,  
Rescued from death by force, though pale and faint . . .

The word 'late' is an indefinite time reference; it can mean four years, or one. His late wife is now a 'saint' because she is a soul in heaven. The deceased Marchioness of Winchester was a 'bright saint', a 'new welcome saint'. Leaving Alcestis, the poet returns to the description of

Mine, as whom washed from spot of child-bed taint,  
Purification in the old law did save . . .

The syntax is difficult here, but if we pick up the verb (line 9) and re-phrase the passage, the lines read: 'Mine came vested all in white, as one whom (washed from spot of child-bed taint) purification in the old

law did save.' But Milton's meaning is still not clear. Does he intend to imply that she had *actually* died in childbirth, or, on the contrary, that she had died *after* her period of purification and was thus saved? According to *Leviticus*, if a woman

bear a maid child, then she shall be unclean two weeks, as in her impurity: and she shall continue in the blood of her purifying threescore and six days.

[XII. 5]

Katherine Woodcock, Milton's second wife, did not die in childbirth, as the early biographers and editors supposed. Pertinent to our discussion is Bishop Newton's reason for rejecting Milton's grand-daughter's assertion 'that Milton's second wife did not die in childbed . . . but above three months after of a consumption'. 'In this particular', Newton declared, 'she must be mistaken . . . for our author's sonnet on his deceased wife plainly implies that she did die in childbed.' But Katherine's daughter was born on 19 October 1657, and the mother did not die until 3 February 1658—a month and ten days after the 'threescore and six days' of purification. Would this circumstance, however, have reminded the poet of *Leviticus*? What is the point of the allusion? Would not Milton have been more likely to think of 'the old law' if his wife had died *before* being 'washed from spot of child-bed taint', and if he had later dreamed of her as still alive—as one who had, in other words, survived to be purified?

Mary Powell died three days after her daughter was born. If our reasoning thus far is correct, she is a more logical subject for the sonnet than is Katherine Woodcock. The latter's child died soon after her mother; Mary's child lived. The poem says nothing about the fate of the offspring, but continues with ambiguous description:

And such as yet once more I trust to have  
Full sight of her in heaven without restraint . . .

Blindness is, of course, the 'restraint' which the poet hopes will be removed in heaven, where he can see his wife again. In the dream, however, the poet is not blind: 'Methought I saw', he begins; to his 'fancied sight' she appears. She is 'vested all in white, pure as her mind'. Nevertheless, as in the case of *Alcestis*,

Her face was veiled, yet to my fancied sight  
Love, sweetness, goodness, in her person shined  
So clear, as in no face with more delight.

Here we have an apparent contradiction. In the dream he could not see her face clearly, but could see only the virtue shining from it. On the other hand, in heaven he trusts to have 'full sight' of her 'once more'. Unless one wishes to call this careless writing and assume that the poet does not mean

<sup>1</sup> *Life of Milton* (1749), p. lix.

what he says, the lines cannot refer literally to Katherine Woodcock, because there is not the slightest reason for believing that Milton ever saw his second wife before his blindness. If he never had 'full sight' of her, he could not have it 'once more'. Again the lines point to Mary Powell as a more likely subject. The evidence is not final and conclusive, but where is any evidence favouring Katherine Woodcock? Any evidence, that is, apart from the unsupported conjectures we have long been meeting in print?

The conclusion of this sonnet is as overpowering in its simplicity as the Piedmont Massacre sonnet is overpowering in majesty of sound:

But O as to embrace me she inclined,  
I waked, she fled, and day brought back my night.

The last line, with its syntactical flurry of excitement followed by a dreary march of monosyllables, contains perhaps the most affecting ten words in all of English poetry.

Milton mentions the death of Mary Powell in only one of his prose works. Speaking of the publication of the scurrilous *Clamor* (1652), he declares in his *Defensio Pro Se* (1655):

But at that time, in a special way, I was oppressed with concerns far different.  
My health was bad, I was mourning the recent loss of two members of my family, and the light had now quite vanished from my eyes.

In May of 1652 Mary had died; in June the little boy, John, had followed her. Three years later, the blind husband and father had not forgotten his grief. Is it fanciful to suppose that soon after publishing his last *Defensio*, he dreamed one day of the wife he had twice lost, and composed a sonnet of reawakened sorrow?

WILLIAM RILEY PARKER.

### PARADISE LOST. I, 341

. . . up call'd a pitchy cloud  
Of Locusts, warping on the Eastern wind.

'Warping' seems just right until one turns to the commentators. The common gloss is Patrick Hume's, the first annotator of the poem: 'working themselves forward; a sea-term'. This is attributed by Newton to Hume and Richardson, the next annotator, jointly; but Richardson's gloss, as we shall see, is quite different. Subsequent commentators follow Hume, although the metaphor of warping a ship is inappropriate and spoils the effect of the word on the untutored imagination. To warp a ship is to haul it against wind or tide, or in a calm; but the locusts came down wind—'the East wind brought the locusts' (Exodus x. 13). Keightley, who saw the discrepancy, assumed that Milton mistook the technical term: 'this will not apply by any means to the progress of the swarm of locusts, whose motion seems rather to be what he afterwards (xi. 840) calls *hulling*,

undulating with the wind' ('Errors in *Paradise Lost*', *Life of Milton*, p. 432). But this will not do either; hulling is too sluggish, as warping is too strenuous. 'Hulling' is used of a ship drifting without sails; it is applied by Milton correctly to Noah's ark, and it is not likely that he meant hulling when he said warping. Masson and others, however, use Keightley's honest note to temper or adulterate Hume's; thus Verity's gloss is, 'working themselves, undulating, forward; the metaphor of a ship'.

Jonathan Richardson in 1734 offered a better interpretation, which has been ignored. After quoting Hume's note he says: '*Warping* also signifies bending. This gives us a better picture. The great cloud of locusts was brought by the East Wind, and we imagine we see it of a vast length, aloft, and varying its form, bending this way and that as long clouds do, or as a large flock of birds.' On the only other occasion, according to the Index of the Columbia edition, when Milton uses the word, it definitely has this sense of bending or deviating from a direct course: 'he fals off again warping and warping till he comes to contradict himself in diameter' (*Apology against a Pamphlet called a Modest Confutation*).

If commentators wish still to cling to a nautical metaphor there is Pope's authority for using the word in the required sense of shifting course before the wind:

Then warp my voyage on the southern gales,  
O'er the warm Libyan wave to spread my sails.

(*Odyss.*, iv, 103-4.)

The gloss I would propose for Milton's 'warping' is 'veering'.

B. A. WRIGHT.

## NOTES ON STEELE AND THE BEEF-STEAK CLUB

The best accounts of the Beef-Steak Club are to be found in J. Timbs, *Clubs and Club Life in London* (London, 1873) and R. J. Allen, *The Clubs of Augustan London* (Cambridge, Mass., 1933). The following notes are given in correction and elaboration of those accounts; in particular the evidence that 'tempted' Mr. Allen to the conclusion that Steele was a member of the Club is examined in more detail.

The earliest known references to the Club are found in Dr. William King's *Art of Cookery*, 'Humbly inscrib'd to the Honourable Beef Steak Club'. This book was published about February or March 1708 (not 1709, as Timbs and Allen state), though much of it seems to have been written a year or more earlier and it was in type at the end of 1707. Mr. Allen suggests (p. 137) that the Club must have been founded 'somewhat before 1705, if William King's undated *Miscellanies in Prose and Verse* is rightly assigned to that year; for the volume is dedicated "To the Right Honour-



able Lords and Gentlemen, Members of the Immortal Beef-Steak Clubb [sic]. . .'. But as the present writer has attempted to establish,<sup>1</sup> Dr. William King's *Miscellanies* were not collected until 1708 and were published at the end of that year or early in 1709. No evidence has been produced to show that the Club was in existence much before 1708. In his *Secret History of Clubs* (1709) Ned Ward speaks of this Club as having existed for some time, but his account is generally unreliable. It is likely that the Club had only recently been founded when at the beginning of 1708 King sought to win the favour of its members by dedicating to them his very appropriate Horatian poem on cookery.

The *Encyclopædia Britannica* (fourteenth edition) is consequently at least a year out in giving 1709 as the date of the Club's foundation. Similarly the *O.E.D.* overlooks earlier records of the word 'beef-steak' by giving as its first quotation Addison's reference to the Club in the *Spectator* for 10 March 1711 (No. 9). The earlier uses are:

He that of Honour, Wit and Mirth partakes,  
May be a fit Companion o'er Beef-steaks.  
(*Art of Cookery*, 1708.)

Beef-Steaks, when nicely broyl'd with the Gravy in them, may produce as good Blood, and vigorous Spirits, as either of the former.

(*Miscellanies in Prose and Verse*, 1708-9.)

and, for the word used attributively (i.e. 'Beef-Steak Club'), the dedication of both the *Art of Cookery* and the *Miscellanies*.

The *O.E.D.* entry, it may be added, errs in attributing the foundation of the Club to Lord Peterborough, thereby confusing the original Beef-Steak Club with the Sublime Society of Beef-Steaks founded in 1735.

The presiding spirit of the original Beef-Steak Club, though probably not its actual founder, was its 'providore', Richard Estcourt,<sup>2</sup> the tavern-keeper and actor so much admired by Steele for his good-nature, wit and powers of mimicry. Although the Beef-Steak Club is mentioned by name only once in the *Spectator* (and then by Addison),<sup>3</sup> Estcourt is introduced by Steele into both the *Tatler* and *Spectator* in a way that suggests an increasing intimacy between the two men and the strong possibility that Steele was a member of the Beef-Steak Club in 1711 and 1712, if not earlier. Estcourt is first mentioned in the *Tatler* on 25 May 1709 (No. 20) when he is praised by Steele for his acting of Sergeant Kite in Farquhar's *Recruiting Officer*. On 5 August of the same year (No. 51) he appears again

<sup>1</sup> 'Dr. William King's *Miscellanies in Prose and Verse*' in *The Library*, Fourth Series, Vol. xxv, Nos. 1, 2, 1944-5 pp. 37-45.

<sup>2</sup> W. Chetwood, *A General History of the Stage*, London, 1749, p. 141.

<sup>3</sup> *Tatler*, No. 148 (21 March 1710), though it does not mention the Beef-Steak Club, commends the good old English custom of beef-eating. The essay is generally assigned to Addison, but both in subject and manner it more closely resembles the work of Dr. King and contains several close parallels to his *Art of Cookery*.

under the appellation of Tom Mirrour, 'a certain plump merry Fellow' who had informally entertained a company, among which Bickerstaff was present, with his powers of mimicry. If we may so far use the experiences of Bickerstaff as evidence of Steele's activities, it would appear from his remark, 'As soon as I saw him, I recollected I had seen him on the Stage, and immediately knew it to be *Tom Mirrour*, the comical Actor', that, having formerly admired Estcourt as an actor,<sup>1</sup> Steele had recently developed a more personal acquaintance with him. By 7 February 1710 (*Tatler*, No. 130) he is using more intimate terms, calling Estcourt his 'ingenious Apothecary' (Estcourt is said to have been apprenticed to an apothecary and perhaps pursued that calling for a time) and enlisting the sympathetic support of his readers for Estcourt's benefit performance of *The Silent Woman* by informing them that the actor is 'at present disabled by the Gout and Stone'.

The *Tatler* continued until January 1711 and was succeeded by the *Spectator* two months later, but Steele does not mention Estcourt further until January 1712, and then the references are more frequent up to Estcourt's death in August of that year. In Nos. 260, 261, and 263 of the *Spectator* Estcourt had advertised that he was opening the Bumper Tavern in James Street, Covent Garden, and in the following number (2 January) Steele sought to assist this new enterprise by printing with a commendation of its author a letter from Estcourt soliciting support for his tavern. Included with it is a further letter by Estcourt purporting to come from Sir Roger de Coverley, who is represented as praising the wine he has received from Estcourt and promising to make the Bumper Tavern the meeting place of the Spectator Club, which may well be an indication that the Beef-Steak Club was now to meet there. According to Ned Ward, the Beef-Steak Club had originally met 'at the sign of the Imperial Phiz', 'a noted boozing ken, above all others in the City', but having received too much public attention, especially from the boys of Merchant Taylors' School, had by 1709 adjourned 'from thence into a place of obscurity'.<sup>2</sup> It is reasonable to assume that now in 1712 the Club would meet on the premises of its 'providore'. The application by Chetwood in 1749 of this term 'providore' to Estcourt suggests that he had all along been caterer as well as secretary to the Club, and therefore already had some experience of the business when he set up as tavern-keeper in 1712. On the other hand it may be that he only became the Club's 'providore' in consequence of opening the Bumper Tavern, and there is no evidence that he had kept a tavern before this. In fact Sir Roger's approving remark, 'that a Fellow who has been laying out his Money, ever since he was born, for the meer Pleasure

<sup>1</sup> Steele had made his acquaintance in this capacity as early as April 1705 when Estcourt acted the part of Pounce in the original production of *The Tender Husband*.

<sup>2</sup> Quoted by Timbs, *op. cit.*, pp. 107-8.

of Wine, has bethought himself of joining Profit and Pleasure together', makes it almost certain that Estcourt had not followed this occupation before.

A further reference on 5 May 1712 (No. 370) is concerned only with Estcourt's neglected merits as an actor, but it is delivered in a manner that implies Steele's growing friendship with Estcourt and more intimate acquaintance with the details of his personal history. Before that, on 21 April (No. 358), Steele had written contrasting the irregular frolics of some boon companions with the agreeable jollities, the mirth and good humour of a night spent in 'the company of the first Taste'. There is no doubt that the Beef-Steak Club included men of the first rank and taste, and Steele may have had his own experiences of that Club in mind, especially as the essay culminates in praise of Estcourt's behaviour in such a gathering: 'The best Man that I know of for heightening the Revel-Gaiety of a Company . . ., whose jovial Humour diffuses it self from the highest Person at an Entertainment to the meanest Waiter. Merry Tales, accompanied with apt Gestures and lively Representations of Circumstances and Persons, beguile the gravest mind into a Consent to be as humorous as himself'.

Finally, the death of Estcourt moved Steele to write one of the noblest essays in the *Spectator* (No. 468; 27 August 1712). Nowhere in the whole series does his own tender spirit appear more frankly than in this last tribute to a 'memorable Companion' and 'extraordinary Man', to whom he had been obliged 'for so many Hours of Jollity'. Steele is found still striving to win a more just recognition for Estcourt's powers as an actor; yet his own love for the man is most nearly felt when he speaks of Estcourt's excellent qualities 'as a Companion, and a Man qualified for Conversation'. 'Companion', it is to be noted, was the word commonly used at this time to denote a fellow-member of a club, and it is his acquaintance with Estcourt in a club that he has much in mind as he writes: the essay is addressed 'to all who have a Relish for Gaiety, Wit, Mirth or Humour', and he recalls Estcourt's 'inimitable Faculty of telling a Story'. And though he censures those wealthy persons who received Estcourt 'only upon the Foot of contributing to Mirth and Diversion', he does so by contrasting them with those 'Men of Sense, who could taste his Excellencies, [and] were well satisfied to let him lead the Way in Conversation, and play after his own Manner'. Estcourt, it appears, was most appreciated in the most refined company, and Steele is led to a significant conclusion:

I have been present with him among Men of the most delicate Taste a whole Night, and have known him (for he saw it was desired) keep the Discourse to himself the most Part of it, and maintain his good Humour with a Countenance, in a Language so delightful, without Offence to any Person or Thing upon

Earth, still preserving the Distance his Circumstances obliged him to; I say I have seen him do all this in such a charming Manner, that I am sure none of those I hint at will read this, without giving him some Sorrow for their abundant Mirth, and one Gush of Tears for so many Bursts of Laughter.

Who are they that Steele hints at? The evidence adduced strongly favours the assumption that Steele was a member of the same Club as Estcourt. If this assumption is correct, that Club could only have been the Beef-Steak Club, not only the sole Club with which we know Estcourt to have been associated, but the Club in which, as it appears from the accounts of King, Ward and Chetwood, his talents were applauded in the manner that Steele has described. It is not rash to conclude that the Beef-Steak Club, 'composed of the chief wits . . . of the nation', most likely included Steele among its members.

This probability that Steele belonged to the Beef-Steak Club in 1711-12 would seem to strengthen the evidence produced by Mr. Allen that it was inclined to the Whig side in politics, for at that time Steele was also a member of the two strongly Whig Clubs, the Kit-Cat and the Hanover, and it was at the beginning of 1712 that he became active as a Whig propagandist with his political pamphlet, *The Englishman's Thanks to the Duke of Marlborough*. But there is no certainty about the political complexion of the Club. It is true that it was as fiercely derided as the Kit-Cat Club by the Tory Ned Ward (though not strictly on political grounds), and of the several eminent men who are mentioned as friends of Estcourt, the majority were Whigs.<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, Dr. William King was a staunch Tory whose eyes 'were open to all the operations of Whiggism', as Johnson puts it; he had previously received his offices in Ireland from the Tories, and from 1709 to 1712 (for part of the time in association with Swift) was actively engaged in supporting the Harley-St. John faction with his pen. It seems very unlikely, then, that he would have twice in 1708-9 dedicated a book to an avowedly Whig Club. And in his dedications to the Club there are no specially political implications, far less Whig ones, unless it be in the hopeful reference he makes to the progress of the war in Spain in the dedication of the *Miscellanies*. If the Club had any politics at all, these were probably of the moderate kind. If Ward is to be believed, the Club originated in a secession from the Kit-Cats, though on what grounds is not stated. That it involved some form of political compromise seems likely, and that is perhaps what Ward is implying when he points out that the new Club set up 'next door to the Church' and 'opposite to a famous conventicle in the Old Jury'. That is as far as the evidence goes. All that can safely be inferred is that the Club was less addicted to politics than to what Estcourt described as 'the agreeable Service of Wit and Wine'.

<sup>1</sup> *D.N.B.*, art. Richard Estcourt.

It is not known when the Club came to an end, or if it remained in existence long enough to link up with the later Sublime Society of Beef-Steaks. Addison's reference in the *Spectator* shows that it had not disbanded in 1709, as Ward thought possible, but was still in existence in March 1711, and reasons have been given above for supposing that it still met in 1712. Possibly it came to an end with the death of Estcourt in August of that year.

COLIN J. HORNE

### REMINISCENCES IN HOUSMAN

Something may be added to the reminiscences in Housman's poetry pointed out in an appendix to Mr. Grant Richards's *Housman, 1897-1936* (Oxford University Press, 1941), and in *The Times Literary Supplement* of 18 April 1942.

It is on record that Housman admired the *Shorter Poems* of Bridges.

Or beeches strip in storms for winter  
(*Last Poems*, xl, 17)

is probably a reminiscence of Bridges's, 'North Wind in October', 3-4:

The beech scatters her ruddy fire;  
The lime hath stripped to the cold.

Were the lines

To think that two and two are four  
And neither five nor three  
The heart of man has long been sore  
And long 'tis like to be.

(*Last Poems*, xxxv, 9-12)

written with a recollection of Johnson's words at dinner with the professors at St. Andrews on 19 August 1773 as recorded in Boswell's *Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides* (ed. G. B. Hill, p. 64), 'Sir, sorrow is inherent in humanity. As you cannot judge two and two to be either five, or three, but certainly four, so when comparing a worse present state with a better which is past, you cannot but feel sorrow'?

Housman uses several Biblical phrases. He has, for example, 'swept and garnished' (*More Poems*, iii, 11) and 'to save thy soul alive' (*More Poems*, iv, 12). Professor J. C. Prescott has remarked to me that 'before desire shall fail' (*More Poems*, xxii, 8) is a reminiscence of 'and desire shall fail' in *Ecclesiastes*, xii, 5.

Professor Prescott has also reminded me that:

Now the sun his skyward beam  
Has tilted from the Ocean stream.

(*Last Poems*, xxiv, 9-10)



and

The upshot beam would fade  
(*Last Poems*, xli, 30)

contain reminiscences of Milton (*Comus*, 97-98 and 98 respectively).

'Prompt hand' (*Last Poems*, xx, 8) may have been suggested by the Latin phrase 'manu promptus', but it may have come from Gibbon (*The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, ch. xxiv, ed. Bury, vol. ii, p. 527): 'the hand of Julian was prompt and strenuous'.

Has woven a winter robe,  
And made of earth and sea  
His overcoat for ever,  
And wears the turning globe.  
(*Last Poems*, xx, 9-12)

may owe something to the phrase 'caeli muternus amictum' in Lucretius, vi, 1134.

Mr. J. B. Leishman has suggested to me that 'when earth's foundations fled' (*Last Poems*, xxxvii, 2) may be due to a memory of the sound of Shakespeare's 'Foundations fly the wretched' (*Cymbeline*, III. vi, 7).

G. B. A. FLETCHER.

## REVIEWS

**Anglo-Saxon Poetry. An Essay with Specimen Translations in Verse.**  
By GAVIN BONE. Oxford: At the Clarendon Press. 1943. Pp. 79. 5s. net.

The late Mr. Gavin Bone's introductory essay, 'never completed nor revised by the author', considers especially the features of Anglo-Saxon poetry which distinguish it from that of other languages and of later English with which more readers are familiar. On diction, technique and tone there are interesting critical remarks, informally and vividly expressed. If some of the criticism is less penetrating and suffers from colloquial exaggeration of expression, this is understandable in an unfinished draft. By Mr. Bone's enthusiasm the reader who knows no Old English may be stimulated to equip himself for reading this strange poetry. Those who are already acquainted with it will be stimulated to further thought and deeper appreciation, even if they do not always agree with Mr. Bone. They will regret that he could be presented here only in dressing-gown and slippers, not fully dressed for public view. Good literary criticism of Anglo-Saxon poetry is not common. Of Mr. Bone's quality there are glimpses in his introductory essay, and his sensitive appreciation is still better shown in the headnotes to his versions of *The Seafarer* and *The Dream of the Rood*.

Most of the poems or passages that Mr. Bone has translated are to be found in Sweet's *Anglo-Saxon Reader*, though some additional elegiac poems from the Exeter Book are given. The absence of any passages from *Beowulf* is explained in the preface: Mr. Bone made a complete version which, with an essay on the poem, may be published later.

As Mr. Bone indicates in his headnote to *The Seafarer*, his aim is to give the poems as he felt them, to render the spirit rather than to preserve 'strict equivalence of words'. Sometimes he translates closely, sometimes he compresses or omits, sometimes he expands or varies. He has no set metrical scheme. He varies the length of his lines as he finds it convenient. He does not avoid alliteration, but more often he binds his lines together with end-rhyme. In rendering the poems he has not sought uniformity of method. In his attempts to interpret the impressions made on him he is sometimes felicitous. Sometimes, however, the unevenness of metre and diction will fail to please the reader. When the versions are furthest from the originals, and least satisfactory in diction, it is often obviously because of the demands of rhyme.

The versions will give the general reader some impression of the spirit of Anglo-Saxon poetry. They will find less favour with the student who has the originals closely in his mind or before his eye. He will notice the unevenness of the translations, and passages in which the sense and spirit of the Anglo-Saxon seem to have been missed. Old English poetry is not easy to understand—*mag ic be me sylfum soðgied urecan*—and is difficult to render accurately and neatly in verse. It would therefore be ungracious, especially in reviewing a memorial volume, to dwell on the weaker element in Mr. Bone's renderings. Yet an instance may be given, from the Gnostic Verses of the Cotton MS., where the translation varies importantly from the Anglo-Saxon.

If you should ever advise a great lord,  
Urge him to giving and not to invading.

Admirable though the sentiment may be it misrepresents the original, which lays stress on the duty of the Germanic chieftain to wage war and to reward his followers:

Geongne æpeling sceolan gode gesiðas  
byldan to beaduwe and to beahgife.

But the student of Old English poetry, if he sometimes challenges Mr. Bone's interpretations, may yet be the better for considering them, and he will appreciate felicitous renderings of words and phrases and passages.

Tribute should be paid to the Clarendon Press for the attractive form of the volume, which is in effect that of the 'Tudor and Stuart Library'. The proportions of the page enable it to take, without turn-over, the long lines into which the versions often swell. Though two or three misprints have slipped through—one may doubt whether the translator intended to transform into 'Beadshild' the Beadohild of *Deor*—the Press has produced, in the difficult conditions of wartime, a volume which in appearance would have satisfied even the fastidious taste of Mr. Bone. It is enriched, moreover, with an appealing portrait of him by Sir Muirhead Bone.

F. W. BAXTER.

**The Warning Drum.** THE BRITISH HOME FRONT FACES NAPOLEON. BROADSIDES OF 1803. Edited by FRANK J. KLINGBERG and SIGURD B. HUSTVEDT. (Publications of The William Andrews Clark Memorial Library.) Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press; London: Cambridge University Press. 1944. Pp. x+287. \$ 4.00.

It was a good idea to print, with introduction and notes, this collection of seventy broadsides exactly as they are bound together in a contemporary volume in the Clark Library. They are admirably representative of the Invasion broadsides that poured out in the summer of 1803, one category only of the 'Loyal Papers' and 'Patriotic Publications' of those months. Despite the threats of invasion between 1795 and 1801, and the still more serious dangers of 1804 and 1805, these broadsides are confined to a short period in 1803 (the peak being towards the end of July) when they covered the walls and hoardings of London and were sold cheaply to those who would give them away, or have them 'stuck up' in country villages. They were a reaction to sudden danger, extreme unpreparedness, and emergency measures. Analogies with 1940 need no stressing. Contrasts are also striking; though the mass of the nation was loyal there was much ignorance and inertia<sup>1</sup> and some dangerous notions were abroad: that the poorer classes had nothing to lose by invasion, that the French were irresistible, that Bonaparte was a romantic hero. And on the other hand, that the Navy was all-sufficient, that one Englishman was equal to ten Frenchmen, that invasion was not seriously intended. The broadsides are very effectively directed against these notions. Their political background is the bewildering sequence of defence measures in June and July, and especially the Levy en Masse Act for the local enrolment of men between seventeen and fifty-five. Emmet's Rebellion is the background of appeals to Irishmen. Most of the broadsides are direct or indirect appeals for volunteers and for contributions to the various patriotic funds that were hurriedly

<sup>1</sup> "Timoleon" begins his appeal: 'Englishmen! You have been unjustly charged with Supineness and Despondency' (p. 113). Windham writes, 29 July: 'From Norfolk I have sad reports of supineness and apathy, and in some degree of disaffection' (*Windham Papers*, 1913, ii, 210).

set on foot. A striking exception is *Advice Suggested by the State of the Times* in which Wilberforce (who had opposed the declaration of war) urges that though 'We bear upon us but too plainly the marks of a declining empire', prayer 'may for a while avert our ruin'. The spate of propaganda seems to derive from spontaneous individual effort and from the enterprise (doubtless not without reward in cash or credit) of a set of august London booksellers and especially Asperne of 'The Bible, Crown, and Constitution' <sup>1</sup> in Cornhill, Hatchard, the founder of a dynasty, and Ginger, with whom Hatchard had served his apprenticeship, both with shops in Piccadilly.

Despite their common object the broadsides are very varied. It is noteworthy that there is no anti-Jacobinism: the transition from the spirit of the late war is complete. The danger is shown to be the inveterate enmity of a military autocrat who sees in England the only obstacle to a career of conquest. (At this time the caricaturists were depicting John Bull as the only obstacle to 'Boney's Stride over the Globe'.) The patriotism is direct, pervaded with pride in national history and in inherited liberties, and enthusiastically loyal. A suitable motto for the collection would be 'If England to itself do rest but true', and, for a slogan, 'Our King! Our Country! And our God!' the heading of *Sheridan's Address to the People* (so-called) which, both in advertisements and in contemporary comment, is given special prominence. <sup>2</sup> This is not to be found in Sheridan's speeches (p. 286), but is the patriotic speech of Rolla the Peruvian which made the fortune of *Pizarro* (1799), Sheridan's melodramatic adaptation of Kotzebue's play. Francis Horner, advising on 'incitements to patriotism' for Edinburgh (and recommending Brougham's as the most skilful pen), wrote (29 July): 'Placards on the walls have some effect: we have here, for want of original matter, the speeches of King John and Henry the Fifth, Rolla's speech signed R. B. Sheridan, &c. Elizabeth's speech to her troops at Tilbury they have not, though it is better than any.' <sup>3</sup> He must mean *Shakespeare's Ghost* (pp. 123-5), a medley of patriotic speeches from the two plays. The last line of Henry V's speech is altered to 'Cry God for Us! For England! and King George'. As the editors say, 'the broadside writers enlist the great dramatist definitely among the defenders of England'. He is misquoted with disarming abandon. 'A Shopkeeper' ends his appeal: 'Let the welfare of our Country animate all—and we'll shock 'em.' <sup>4</sup> John of Gaunt's speech is quoted in another paper (p. 37).

Among reprints are an extract from Massinger's *The Bondman*, with an appeal to Englishmen to have no less good sense and patriotism than the Syracusans; *Britannia's Charge to the Sons of Freedom*, by Rowe, published as a broadside in 1703; a recent prologue by Colman, and *The Declaration of the Merchants, Bankers, Traders, and Other Inhabitants of London* . . . (26 July), signed by

<sup>1</sup> A device perhaps adopted to suit the occasion. Asperne succeeded Sewell in November 1802; the latter's shop was 'the resort of the first mercantile characters in the City' (H. R. Plomer, *A Dictionary of Printers and Booksellers*, 1932). Other well-known names are Stockdale (John, not the notorious J. J.) and F. and C. Rivington. Two of the printers are equally august: Luke Hansard and Lane of the Minerva Press.

<sup>2</sup> Gillray, in *John Bull and the Alarmist* (1 September, 1803) depicts Sheridan (the Alarmist) as a bill-sticker with bundles of his *Address* under his arm, against a wall covered with that and other Invasion broadsides. Cobbett wrote (10 September): 'It has been and yet is stuck up on every dead wall, rotten post, and dirty corner in this metropolis . . .' (Cobbett's *Annual Register*, iv, 391). In October 1940 it was printed in *The Times* under 'Old and True'.

<sup>3</sup> *Memoirs and Correspondence of Francis Horner*, ed. Leonard Horner, 1843, i, 225.

<sup>4</sup> Barlow's *Ghost* quotes "'the World in Arms'" (p. 135).

Jacob Bosanquet as Chairman, but written by Sir James Mackintosh.<sup>1</sup> The last is a stirring appeal: 'We fight to preserve the *whole Earth* from the barbarous Yoke of military Despotism!—we fight for the Independence of all Nations, even of those who are most indifferent to our Fate, or the most blindly jealous of our Prosperity!' The verse ranges from the ode in heroic couplets to the patriotic song, and new versions (three) of *God save the King*. As is fitting, there is a 'Loyal Effusion' with 'creaking couplets' (read at the Literary Fund meeting on 14 July) by W. T. Fitzgerald, who survives in *Rejected Addresses* as the writer par excellence of bad patriotic verse, and of whom Canning said 'Poeta nascitur non Fitz'. Besides these poetic flights there is much good practical advice (e.g.): 'Wealthy citizens must be content to take their stand in the ranks, unless they have abilities for more arduous stations' (p. 42). There are also some telling remarks, for instance 'His [Bonaparte's] situation forces him to be despotic: Liberty grows out of an old and secure government: a new government must support itself with the bayonet . . .' (p. 62).

Atrocities have an inevitable place in such propaganda. The long series of 'Boney's Cruelties' begins with Sir Robert Wilson's *History of the British Expedition to Egypt* (1802), which earned him the name of 'Jaffa Wilson'. Jaffa recurs repeatedly in the broadsides, the reference being to the massacre of the garrison, together with the prisoners of El Arish, and (on the return from Syria) the poisoning of plague-stricken French soldiers. Other indictments were progressively added, including the fate of Toussaint L'Ouverture, twice mentioned here: he 'gave himself up on French Honor and has reaped the fruits of French Faith'. Bonaparte's religious opportunism figures largely. He tells John Bull: 'I was first a Deist; then a Papist in Italy; afterwards a Mahometan in Egypt, and am now an Atheist' (p. 102). There are several examples of crude burlesque with a proletarian appeal.

The editors have collated the titles with the Catalogues of the Bibliotheca Lindesiana and the British Museum, but in their introduction and notes they envisage readers with no knowledge of English or European history, and find it necessary to explain (e.g.) that 'Helvetia is a name often applied to Switzerland'. Though there is much information and some interesting comment, the serious student is not well served. The broadsides are placed in a generalized background of England after the breach of the Peace of Amiens but are not related to the actual situation. For this the *Parliamentary History* is essential; the brief belated summaries of debates in the *Gentleman's Magazine* (for 1803) are valueless: a short quotation—the gibe of an opponent—(p. 222) gives a very wrong impression of Windham's opposition to the volunteers.<sup>2</sup> One statement calls for comment: 'The hope repeatedly mentioned in the broadsides was that robust English nationalism would be able to recruit Continental nationalisms with which to fight French nationalism. The appeals to the peoples of Europe to regain their liberties had a most specific objective: to turn against the French dominance not only Spanish nationalism, but also German, Italian, Russian, Swedish, and Polish' (p. 16). But no such hope is expressed, and there are no appeals to Europe in these papers intended for English walls and parish pumps. (One only, *The London Declaration*, had a wider scope.) Such a theme is utterly

<sup>1</sup> Horner, *op. cit.*, i, 227. The Chairman's speech was also printed as a broadside.

<sup>2</sup> He maintained rightly that recruiting for the regular army was obstructed. Addington's defence measures starved the Militia of Reserve to raise a vast crowd of volunteers impossible to equip, organize or discipline. (Sir John Fortescue, *The County Lieutenancies and the Army*, 1909). Cf. the advice in one of the broadsides to 'use hedgestakes in lieu of arms.'



alien to their spirit, which is insular, often to naïveté. Nor could such a conception have been formulated before the wholly unexpected Spanish rising. England is indeed admonished to be an example to Europe, and the liberation of Europe by the British is sometimes envisaged. It should be noted that Gilbert Wakefield was not sentenced for 'criticising the Emperor of Russia', but for maintaining (*inter alia*) that the poorer classes had nothing to lose by a French invasion. There were not two cases relating to Press criticism of the Tsar, but one, a frank measure of appeasement when the alliance with Russia depended on the insanely erratic Paul.<sup>1</sup> It was not the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland but the Chief Justice who was murdered in Emmet's Rebellion. The radical societies did not lose their members whether persons were convicted or acquitted. On the contrary.<sup>2</sup> The Combination Act of 1799 had nothing to do with the statutory suppression of the London Corresponding Society in that year (p. 255). In the line, 'By Sydney's scaffold and by Russell's wreath', Russell is not the Admiral Russell of p. 150, but Lord William Russell, executed in 1683. With the single exception of *Thraliana*, contemporary memoirs and correspondence are absent from a somewhat haphazard bibliography.

M. D. GEORGE.

**Thomas De Quincey's Literary Theory.** By SIGMUND K. PROCTOR. (University of Michigan Publications, Language and Literature, vol. XIX.) Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1943. London: H. Milford, 1944. Pp. viii+313. \$3.50; 20s. net.

Dr. Proctor sets out to show in this present study how De Quincey's discursiveness and inconsistencies may fall into place in a detailed consideration of his literary theory. Much can be explained by the fundamental dualism in De Quincey's mentality. He attaches supreme importance by turns to intense feeling and to pure intellect. He is an intellectualist and a mystic, but not an intellectual mystic. On the one hand, he often follows the exhortation to the reader in the essay 'On the Knocking at the Gate in *Macbeth*': 'The mere understanding, however useful and indispensable, is the meanest faculty in the human mind, and the most to be distrusted.' From this conviction spring his concept of feeling as the agency of truth, his belief in the literature of power, often opposed to the literature of understanding. The literature of power leads to the emotional realization of the Infinite, which for him means the universe of moral and spiritual experience. The aesthetic apprehension of this is the sublime, and Dr. Proctor devotes an important section of the book to the many ramifications of the whole concept.

To his belief in intellectual power as the object of the arts belong his pronouncements on style. Dr. Proctor here stresses De Quincey's use of the word as the articulation and counterpoint of words, sentences, and larger units. In this love of manipulation lies the key to his theory of rhetoric. Dr. Proctor's thesis, ably argued, is that the form and many of the seeming contradictions of De Quincey's literary theory are explained by his passion for mind-play, for 'the art which ministers to the mind's delight in hanging upon its own thoughts, playing with them, pursuing them through a maze of changes'. In this recognition of

<sup>1</sup> *State Trials*, ed. Howell, xxvii, 627 ff.

<sup>2</sup> Francis Place writes: 'The Acquittal of Hardy, Tooke and Thelwall tended to lessen the alarm, and the more thinking part of the common people joined the Reforming Societies in great numbers . . .' (B.M. Add. MSS. 27808, fol. 28). See also *Recollections of the Life of John Binns*, Philadelphia, 1854.

such an important factor in human thinking and literary expression lies De Quincey's essential importance as a psychological critic.

There cannot be final agreement on the qualities and merits of so paradoxical and subtle a mind, but Dr. Proctor's study gives a fresh and challenging argument, usefully augmented by an appendix by Dr. Clarence D. Thorpe on later studies of De Quincey and on his relation to German literature.

ELIZABETH J. SWEETING.

**George Henry Calvert, American Literary Pioneer.** By IDA GERTRUDE EVERSON. New York: Columbia University Press; London: H. Milford. 1944. Pp. xvi+330. \$3.75; 25s. net.

Miss Everson has devoted great care and years of patient study to this full account of the life and work of a minor figure in the history of nineteenth-century American literature. A very minor figure, I am afraid. None of his work as translator, poet or critic, as exponent of phrenology or socialism, appears to carry the mark of a very distinguished mind. Miss Everson claims Calvert as a pioneer: he was the first American to write biographies of Goethe, Rubens, and Wordsworth. But to say this is not necessarily to say very much. Certainly Calvert's most important work was his translation from the German, the Goethe and Schiller he made available for American readers. His work on Goethe, however, is hardly comparable with that which another American, Alexander Wheelock Thayer, was doing on Beethoven. And the stream of German influence that was really important for American culture came through the New England Transcendentalists with whom Calvert seems to have had little to do.

No one need write another life of Calvert. But it was worth doing once as competently as Miss Everson has done it, for his life illustrates the interests that occupied a nineteenth-century American dilettante greatly concerned with literature but of little originality, who was tied to both America and Europe. Calvert's mother was one of a rich and cultivated Flemish family which had come to Maryland from Belgium to escape the Napoleonic domination. As a young man Calvert came to Britain and to Germany, where he studied at Göttingen, and met Goethe. Returning to America he married and worked as a journalist for a time in Baltimore. Having inherited a competence he travelled again, and settled finally in Newport to devote himself to writing. As far as Calvert is concerned the most engaging chapters in this book are those in which his journeys to Europe are described. Best of all are the lively and intelligent letters descriptive of her life in America which his mother Rosalie Calvert sent to her brother in Belgium.

D. J. GORDON.

## SUMMARY OF PERIODICAL LITERATURE

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BULLETIN OF THE JOHN RYLANDS LIBRARY, MANCHESTER, Vol. 28, No. 2, December 1944—

Scott Letters discovered in Russia (Gleb Struve), pp. 477-84.  
Three letters not in Grierson's edition.

E.L.H., Vol. 11, No. 4, December 1944—

The political allegory of Book IV of *The Faerie Queene* (A. M. Buchan), pp. 237-48.

The plagiarist: Spenser or Marlowe? (W. B. C. Watkins), pp. 249-65.

Donne and the satiric spirit (Arnold Stein), pp. 266-82.

The modern Othello (Leo Kirschbaum), pp. 283-96.

Milton's Harapha and Renaissance comedy (Daniel C. Boughner), pp. 297-306.

MODERN LANGUAGE NOTES, Vol. 59, No. 8, December 1944—

Bahuvrihi in Sears-Roebuck (Anna G. Hatcher), pp. 515-26.

Three-member compounds of the 'gate-leg table' type in Modern English.

John Milton, Scrivener, 1590-1632 (William R. Parker), pp. 532-37.

Milton's winged serpents (Don Cameron Allen), pp. 537-8.

Shelley and the reviewers once more (William S. Ward), pp. 539-42.

Reviews (not hitherto reprinted) of *Victor and Cazire* from the *Antijacobin Review*, and of *The Revolt of Islam* from *The Man of Kent*; the latter tentatively ascribed to Leigh Hunt.

Shelley's revised will (Frederick L. Jones), pp. 542-4.

The stoppage of Shelley's income in 1821 (Nat Lewis Kaderly), pp. 545-7.

Byron's *Hours of Idleness* and other than Scotch reviewers (William S. Ward), pp. 547-50.

Sixteen reviews, eleven not previously cited by writers on Byron.

Scott's *Antiquary* and Defoe's *History of Apparitions* (John Robert Moore), pp. 550-1.

An indebtedness of Coleridge to Crashaw (Sister Eugenia Logan), pp. 551-3.  
*Coeli Enarrant* and Crashaw's *In the Glorious Epiphany of our Lord God*.

Browning's *Parley* and de Lassay's *Mémoire* (Viola Cook), pp. 553-6.

Source of *Daniel Barboli* shown to be Sainte-Beuve rather than de Lassay.

*Nincompoop* (Leo Spitzer), pp. 565-6.

Some further Chaucer allusions (Dorothy F. Atkinson), pp. 569-70.

A note on the authorship of *Shamela* (Charles Richard Greene), p. 571.

Parallel with Fielding's *The Mock Doctor*.

A note on Keats and Addison (H. E. Briggs), p. 572.

Reference to *The Drummer* in letter of 21 September 1819.

## MODERN LANGUAGE NOTES, Vol. 60, No. 1, January 1945—

The literary source of Hawthorne's *Fanshawe* (Jessie Sidney Goldstein), pp. 1-8.

Maturin's *Melmoth the Wanderer*.

Distinctions between Fancy and Imagination in eighteenth-century English criticism (John Bullitt and W. Jackson Bate), pp. 8-15.

The Kelmscott edition of the *Psalmi Penitentiales* and Morgan Manuscript 99 (Curt F. Bühler), pp. 16-22.

The source MS. of *Charlemagne and Roland* and the Auchinleck bookshop (Ronald N. Walpole), pp. 22-6.

A Catullian echo in George Chapman's *The Revenge of Bussy D'Ambois* (Bertram Jerome Cohon), pp. 29-33.

Macbeth's *cyme* once more (Roland M. Smith), pp. 33-8.

Chaucer's 'Castle in Spain' (*HF* 1117) (Roland M. Smith), pp. 39-40.

Lawman's *Gernemude* (Roland M. Smith), pp. 41-2.

The christening in *The Three Estates* (Edwin Shepard Miller), pp. 42-4.

'Magnificat nunc dimittis' in *Misogonus* (Edwin Shepard Miller), pp. 45-7.

Troilus and pilgrims in war-time (B. J. Whiting), pp. 47-9.

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*A Valediction: of my name, in the window and the Third Satyre.*

A note on Melville's lecture in New Haven (Tyrus Hillway), pp. 55-7.

A quotation by Hazlitt from Rousseau (Wayne D. Clark), p. 57.

Good Anglo-Saxon (Kemp Malone), pp. 57-8.

## — Vol. 60, No. 2, February 1945—

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A note on Henryson and Lydgate (Marshall W. Stearns), pp. 101-3.

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Gothic syntactical notes (Albert Morey Sturtevant), pp. 104-6.

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## MODERN LANGUAGE REVIEW, No. 4, October 1944—

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*Love's Labour's Lost* (F. M. H. Bone), p. 67.

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*King Lear*, IV, iii, 29-32 (S. W. Moses), p. 91.

Defence of 'clamour moisten'd'; see *T.L.S.*, December 23, 1944.

Swinburne on Middleton (Kenneth Muir), p. 91.

Further comment on Swinburne's pencil notes in his copy; see *T.L.S.*, June 17, 1939. Two suggested emendations of Middleton's text.

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*Epiprychidion* and *The Hound of Heaven* (E. W. H. Meyerstein), p. 127.

Charles Dibdin (W. Windebank), p. 127.

See L. G. Dibdin, *T.L.S.*, March 24, p. 139; queries about date of birth and marriage.

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